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THE

CHRISTIAN PREACHER,

OR,

DISCOURSES ON PREACHING,

BY SEVERAL EMINENT DIVINES, ENGLISH AND FOREIGN,

REVISED AND ABRIDGED;

WITH

AN APPENDIX ON THE CHOICE OF *BOOKS.*

BY EDWARD WILLIAMS, D. D.

First American from the Second London Edition, with Improvements.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED FOR, AND PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM W. WOODWARD,
Corner of Second and Chesnut Streets.

1810.

TO

THE STUDENTS

WHO NOW ARE,

AND THE

YOUNG MINISTERS

WHO LATE HAVE BEEN

UNDER THE CARE OF THE EDITOR,

THIS PUBLICATION

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

AND RECOMMENDED,

BY THEIR AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

EDWARD WILLIAMS.

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Williams
c. 1

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DIVINITY SCHOOL
LIBRARY.
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

THE professed general design of this publication is, to afford to Students and young Ministers a portable, yet comprehensive *Encheiridion;* in which they will find the most important and interesting rules and directions that relate to preaching, considered both as an *art* and a *duty*, reduced into perspicuous method, with all the brevity which is consistent with the nature of the subject.

The FIRST Discourse, *On the Gift of Preaching*, was originally published, about the middle of the last century, by Bishop WILKINS, who was eminent as a man of general science, and still more so as a devout christian and orthodox divine. His predilection for analysing all subjects in a scholastic manner, which was the too common fault of his contemporaries, often operated unfavourably against the elegance and forcible effect of his writings. In the present abridgment, it is proposed to preserve all the advantage of method, while the forbidding stiffness of it is avoided. The principal things left out are a very complex analysis of a body of divinity, and a large list of books, the greater part of which are obsolete. The former is, to almost every reader of the present day, utterly useless, tending only to perplex the thoughts without adequate profit; and the latter is superseded by the Appendix to this volume.*

The SECOND Discourse, *Of preaching Christ*, and the THIRD, *Of particular and Experimental Preaching*, were composed by Mr. JOHN JENNINGS, who kept an academy at *Kibworth* in *Leicestershire*, and who was the tutor of the celebrated Dr. DODDRIDGE. They were first published in 1723, with a recommendatory preface, by Dr. WATTS; and were soon after translated and published in the *German* language, by order of Dr. FRANCK, professor of divinity in the university of *Halle*, in *Saxony*. In Dr. WATTS's preface are manifested the same simplicity and good sense; piety and zeal, that so eminently distinguish his other productions. The pious reader will be gratified with it.

"When I see a book well written for the instruction of mankind, I always hope it will spread its good influence as far and wide as it finds readers. But when I meet with a valuable treatise, whose design is to improve the *sacred skill of preaching*, I am ready to persuade myself, "Surely this will become a more extensive benefit; and the good influences of it will reach as many whole assemblies of men as there are ministers who shall happen to read it." For this reason, I cannot but take a special satisfaction in recommending these two discourses to the world; which, in my opinion, are founded upon the general principles of christianity, and therefore invite the perusal of all, being written without the narrow spirit of a party. They seem to be calculated for the common good, nor have I observed any thing in them that can justly give disgust, or awaken any reasonable resentment.

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* WILKINS's Ecclesiastes has been translated into the German language, by Mr. HENRY ITTERSHAGEN, who has added notes of his own, and augmented the catalogue of authors, especially Expositors of the scriptures. Vid. WOLFII Biblioth. Heb. tom. p. 280.

"It must be confessed, without controversy, that there are some things, wherein several preachers of the present time have the advantage of our learned and pious fathers; but there are other excellencies in the sermons of the *puritanical age*, which I should rejoice to find more studiously revived and cultivated in our day. Among these I know none of more eminent necessity, glory, and usefulness, than those two which are the subjects of this little book; I mean the *evangelical turn of thought* that should run through our ministry, and the *experimental way of discourse* on practical subjects.

"It has been justly observed, that where a great and universal *neglect of preaching Christ* hath prevailed in a christian nation, it hath given a fatal occasion to the growth of *Deism* and *Infidelity*; for when persons have heard the sermons of their clergy, for many years together, and find little of Christ in them, they have taken it into their heads, that men may be very good men, and go safe to heaven, without christianity; and therefore, though they dwell in a land where the gospel is professed, they imagine there is no need they should be christians. But what a blot and reproach would it be to our ministry, if infidels and heathens should multiply among us, through such a woful neglect of preaching *the peculiar doctrines of Christ!*

"Besides, let us consider, how little hath been our success, in comparison of the multitudes converted by our fathers in the day of their ministry. Hath not this been matter of sore complaint these many years past? Now it is worth our inquiry, whether it may not be ascribed to the *absence of Christ* in our sermons. And what reason indeed can we have to expect the presence and influence of the *Spirit of Christ*, if we have his person, his offices, his grace, and his gospel, out of our discourses, or give but a slight and casual hint at these glorious subjects which ought to be our daily theme? This is what our author would put us in mind of in his *first* discourse.

" And perhaps another cause of our want of success hath been this, That we have too much left off the way of our fathers, in distinguishing the characters of our hearers, and ' dividing the word aright to saints and sinners, to the stupid and the profane, the awakened and convinced, the mournful and penitent, the presumptuous and obstinate, the deserted and despairing.

" This method appears eminently in the labours of the former age. Those two great and good men, Mr. Flavel and Mr. Baxter, might be divided in their sentiments on other subjects, but you find this conduct runs through all their *practical* writings. This is a great part of what the *second* discourse here recommends to us, under the title of ' *experimental* preaching.'

" Our author indeed assumes not so much to himself, as to address any besides *students* and *younger ministers*. But if in the middle age of life, we should examine our performances by the light of this treatise, it is possible we and our people might be gainers by it.

" Have we not been too often tempted to follow the *modish way*, and speak to our hearers in *general* terms, as though they were ALL converted already, and sufficiently made christians by a national profession? Have not some of us spent our labour to build them up in the practice of duties, without teaching them to search whether the foundation has been laid in an entire change and renovation of heart? Do we lead them constantly to inquire into the inward state of their spirits, their peculiar difficulties, dangers, and temptations, and give them peculiar assistance in all this variety of the christian life?

" With how much more efficacy does the word of God impress the conscience, when every hearer finds himself described without the preacher's personal knowledge of him! When his own spiritual state is painted to the life, and as it were, set before his eyes in the language of the preacher! When a word of conviction, advice or comfort, is spoken so pertinently to his own case, that he takes it as directed to himself. How much more powerful and more penetrating will our sermons be, when those who come into our assemblies shall be 'convinced and judged, and have the secrets of their hearts made manifest, and confess that God is in the midst of us of a truth!

"The perusal of these excellent discourses in manuscript hath given me so much satisfaction, that I take a sensible pleasure to think that the press will communicate them to the world; and then I hope for a further share of profit, by keeping them always at my right hand when I am preparing for the service of the sanctuary. May the blessed Spirit of God teach those who enter into the sacred office this holy skill of winning souls! May he awaken us all to see what may be mended in our ministrations, in order to publish the gospel of Christ with more illustrious and divine success.

The FOURTH Discourse, *Of the most useful way of preaching*, was written originally as a letter to a friend, in the *German* language, by the excellent Dr. FRANCK, and was translated into Latin by order of his son. The two discourses, by Mr. J. JENNINGS, and this letter, translated by his brother, were reprinted in *London*, 1736, with Dr. WATTS's preface, and the following advertisement by the same hand:

"That excellent letter, concerning the best method of preaching, which stands annexed to this new edition of Mr. JENNINGS's discourses, was written in the *German* tongue by that venerable and apostolic man, HERMAN AUGUSTUS FRANCK, late professor of divinity at *Halle*, in *Saxony*, and was communicated to me, last winter, by his worthy son, GOTTHILF AUGUSTUS FRANCK, who happily fills and adorns the same post in that university, and seems to be possessed of the same spirit of faith and love. It is now turned into English by my valuable friend Mr. DAVID JENNINGS, the surviving brother of the author, who perfectly agreed with me in this sentiment, that it should be made public in our own language, and printed together with these two discourses, as being eminently suited to promote the same design of an experimental and evangelical way of preaching. And I persuade myself, that every reader who could relish and approve what Mr. JOHN JENNINGS has written on this subject, will be very well pleased and entertained with the perusal of this small essay of that great man, professor FRANCK, on the same argument; and may both be attended with divine success!"

"This is a book," says Mr. ORTON,* speaking of the two discourses and letter recommended by Dr. WATTS, "that deserves the serious attention of every minister; and I have been informed, that at its first publication, two bishops of the church of England, with an amiable candour, publicly recommended it to the perusal of their clergy, at their visitations."

The FIFTH Discourse, *On Rules of Conduct*, has a more strict relation to *preaching* than the title seems at first to import, since it refers to the preacher's *personal religion*, his *private studies*, and *public labours*, no less then his *conversation*. It is an abridgment of the first part of Dr. WATTS'S "Humble attempt towards the revival of practical religion." In the preface to that publication, the author observes:

"The exhortation to ministers was composed at the request of my worthy friend and brother, Mr. JOHN OAKES, and designed to have been delivered at his public ordination, in the congregation of dissenting protestants, at *Cheshunt*, in *Hertfordshire*, on Nov. 12th, 1729. But the providence of God prevented me from fulfilling that service, by confining me to a bed of sickness on that day. In the composition of that discourse my thoughts ran out to four or five times the length of what would have been sufficient for that service, so that I must have greatly contracted it in the delivery. But being much importuned, both by my reverend brother, who has perused far the greatest part of it, and by the congregation now under his care, to make it public, I have revised it with a larger view, and humbly hope that my younger brethren in the ministry may be, in some measure, excited and encouraged hereby, to do their part toward the revival of decaying piety."

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* Life of DODDRIDGE, p. 13.

The SIXTH Discourse, On the evil and danger of neglecting the souls of men, has, till now, appeared in the form of a *sermon*, by Dr. DODDRIDGE, originally delivered as a devotional lecture to his pupils, and afterwards considerably enlarged no doubt, to a number of ministers assembled at *Kettering*, *Northamptonshire*, in Oct. 1741. Those parts of it alone, which appeared less adapted to answer the design of this publication are omitted.

The SEVENTH Discourse, On the *Composition of a Sermon*, was written in French, by the great and good Mr. JOHN CLAUDE, who was minister of the French reformed church, at *Charenton*. In the year 1779, Mr. R. ROBINSON, of Cambridge, published an English translation of it, accompanied with a great number of notes, resembling the contents of a common-place book of ecclesiastical history, anecdotes, divinity, preaching, &c. in 2 vols. 8vo. The present discourse is an abridgment of these volumes. If it be thought singular how the *substance* of so large a work can be reduced to a compass comparatively so narrow, it should be observed, that the essay itself is, in French, but 330 pages of small 8vo. and about one half of that consists of diffuse exemplifications of texts, which are now inserted in a more compressed, and, to the student, a more advantageous form, in the notes. And when it is understood that of the whole mass of Mr. ROBINSON's notes those only are retained which are most valuable, and relate to preaching, the reader will think the attempt very practicable. It should however be remembered, that the design of this abridgment is not to supercede the original volumes of Mr. ROBINSON, or the later edition of CLAUDE, by Mr. SIMEON, but rather to promote the circulation of their chief excellencies.

The APPENDIX, *directing to a proper choice of books for the Christian Preacher's Library*, is not intended as a full and complete enumeration even of useful and valuable publications, which would require a large volume, but only of those works which the editor either best knows as excellent, and can recommend with confidence; or else those which are worthy of regard on account of some peculiar circumstances. Many of the works of the last century, and some others, may never be reprinted, because too voluminous, defective in style and composition, or for want of a patron; and yet may be of great utility on account of excellent properties. On these, and similar accounts, several books are noticed, which otherwise would not have been; and, to obviate any danger which might arise from the insertion of books which have no claim on *universal* commendation, the most prominent feature of an author's *excellence* is generally pointed out, and occasionally a *defect*, by way of caution. It would have been more easy to enlarge the number of books, than it was to know where to stop; my design was not to form a volume, but an appendix to a small one; not to furnish a *sumptuous* library, but to assist the christian preacher in the choice of such books as may be most *useful* to him in his great work. And among these we must reckon as the principle, those which abound with theological information in reference to fundamental *principles*, or such as discover the happiest method of bringing divine truths to the *heart*, and from thence to the life. This part of the list is therefore the most copious.

It is obvious, the subjoined catalogue contains a much greater number of books than can be supposed indispensably needful for the generality of young divines, who may be useful and respectable ministers, with a library on a much more contracted scale. A great diversity of circumstances ought to be taken into the account, especially pecuniary means, and literary attainments. The thoughtful student, or young minister, should call in prudence to his aid, and inquire, "Quid ferre recusent, quid valeant humeri," what suits his genius and abilities, and how he can bear the weight of expence. Perhaps it would not be a proportion much amiss, were we to say, that a learned and studious minister in a private station, making allowances for extraordinary cases, should compute the furniture of his beloved study, including books, helps and conveniences, at one half of the whole furniture of his house. And the greatest part of this ought to be the best books in divinity. His delightful study should be to him what the counting-house is to the industrious merchant, or the laboratory to the successful chemist; and skill in the in the use of books, especially the Book of God, for a divine, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, is not less necessary than skill in the forms of business is to a tradesman, or dexterity in the use of an apparatus to an experimental philosopher. Nor should the presumptuous thought be once harboured, that the use of books, whether few or many, is to supercede prayer for gracious aids; but rather to assit our graces, and to improve our gifts.

I am fully sensible, that persons who have different views of RELIGION from those contained in this volume, will not be pleased with the selection, but will condemn it as *calvi-*

nistically partial: my apology is, that it comports with the views of such men as Wilkins and Watts, Jennings and Doddridge, Franck and Claude; a partiality that suited the taste of men equally illustrious for learning and goodness, the greatest ornaments of the christian pulpit, and the richest benefactors of mankind.

E. WILLIAMS.

Rotherham,
Oct. 1800.

THE

CHRISTIAN PREACHER, &c.

DISCOURSE I.

ON THE GIFT OF PREACHING.

§ 1. *Introduction.* The importance of the art of preaching. § 2. One chief reason why good scholars and divines are often bad preachers. § 3. What is implied in the gift of preaching. § 4. (I.) Concerning METHOD. § 5. Different kinds of method, and which preferable. § 6. The parts of a sermon according to its external form; and more essential parts. § 7. (i.) *Explication.* Of opening the text. § 8. Of texts which have a double sense. § 9. One great help of interpreting the books of scripture is to know their times, references and order. § 10. Of explaining words and phrases. § 11. Doctrinal observations. § 12. Of stating the subject, whether doctrinal or practical. § 13. (ii.) *Confirmation* of the subject proposed; in doctrinal points, from scripture and reason. § 14. In practical, from divine testimony. § 15. From reason, and § 16. Experience. § 17. (iii.) Of the *Application*, both § 18. Doctrinal, and § 19. Practical, for reproof. § 20. Consolation, and § 21. Exhortation. § 22. The conclusion. § 23. (II.) Concerning MATTER, which ought to be seasonable, and § 24. Pertinent. To promote which are proposed several helps; particularly, § 25. Reading and the knowledge of books. § 26. (III.) Concerning EXPRESSION; which must be plain. § 27. Full, § 28. Sound, § 29. Affectionate. § 30. The manner of composing Sermons. § 31. Elocution, in which two extremes are to be avoided, too much boldness, and too much fear.

§ 1. IT is the end of all *sciences* and *arts*, to direct men, by certain rules, to the most compendious way of *knowledge* and *practice*. Those things of which we have only some imperfect, confused notions, are herein fully and clearly represented to our view, from the discoveries that other men have made, after much study and long experience. And there is nothing of greater consequence for the advancement of learning, than to find out particular existing advantages for the shortest way of knowing and teaching things in every profession.

Amongst all other callings, therefore, this of *preaching*, being in many respects one of the most weighty and solemn, should have its *rules*, whereby we may be directed the easiest and readiest way for the practice of it.—Besides all those academical preparations by the study of languages, sciences and divinity, with which men should be qualified and predisposed for this calling, there is a particular *art of preaching*, to which if ministers did more seriously apply themselves, it would extremely facilitate that service; making it more easy to themselves, and more profitable to their hearers.

§ 2. There are *two qualifications** requisite in every preacher; a right *understanding* of sound doctrine, and an ability to propound, confirm, and apply it to the *edification of others*. And the first may be without the other. As a man may be a good *lawyer*, and not a good *pleader*; so he may be a good *divine*, and yet not a good *preacher*. One chief reason why divers men, otherwise of eminent parts, are herein so slow and unskilful, is, because they have not been versed in this study, and are therefore unacquainted with those proper rules and directions by which they should be guided in the attaining and exercise of this gift.

It has been the usual course at the university, to venture upon this calling in an abrupt, over-hasty manner. When scholars have passed over their philosophical studies, and made some little entrance upon divinity, they presently think themselves fit for the pulpit, without any farther inquiry; as if the *gift of preaching*, and sacred oratory, were not a distinct art of itself. This would be counted a very preposterous course in other matters; for instance, if a man should presume on his being an *orator*, because he is a *logician;* or to practise *physic*, because he has learned *philosophy!* Certainly, the pre-eminence of this profession above others must needs extremely aggravate the guilt of such neglect, and make it so much the more mischievous, by how much the calling is more solemn. Many have written particularly and largely upon this very subject, concerning the art of preaching, wherein they have laid down such various helps and rules as they, from their own practice and long experience, have found most useful.*

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* Συνεσις, Ερμηνεια. Luke xxi. 15, Σοφια, Στομα.

§ 3. This service of preaching may be considered under a double notion; as a *duty* and a *gift*. It is here insisted upon only in the *second* sense, and may be thus described:—*Such an expertness and facility in the right handling and dividing the word of truth, as may approve us to be workmen that need not to be ashamed.* It requires both spiritual and artificial abilities:

1. Such *spiritual* abilities as must be infused from above, whereby our judgment and affections shall be made experimentally acquainted with all those sacred truths that we are to deliver to others. The only way for the attaining of these, is by prayer, an humble heart, and an holy life.†

2. Such *artificial* abilities as are to be acquired by our own industry. And these are either more *general*, as skill in all those arts and languages which are required as pre-requisites; or more *particular* and immediate for the act of preaching, to which the chief helps are these three, *method*, *matter*, and *expression*. These contribute mutual assistance to one another. A good METHOD will direct to proper MATTER; and suitable matter will invite good EXPRESSION.

* See the *Appendix* to this volume.

† Jam. i. 5. Psal. xxv. 9. John vii. 17.

§ 4. (I.) By METHOD I understand an art of contriving our discourses on such a regular plan, that every part may have its due place and dependence. This will be a great advantage both to ourselves and our hearers:

1. To *ourselves*, and that both for *invention* and *memory*. A man may more easily *find out* things, when, instead of seeking for them at random, he can have direct recourse to all those places and heads from whence they may be most naturally collected; and more easily *retain them*, when they are linked together and not scattered. Method is a chain; if a man should let slip any one part, he may easily recover it again, by that relation and dependence which it has with the whole.— It is also eligible.

2. For the benefit of the *hearers;* who may understand and retain a sermon with greater ease and profit, when they are before-hand acquainted with the general heads of discourse. It is but a bad rule in ALSTED, at least for vulgar auditories, where he advises to conceal and alter the method for the sake of variety; *Crypsis dispositionis tollit fastidium auditoris.** This may be true of itching, curious hearers, but not of such as regard their own profit and edification. An immethodical discourse (though the materials of it may be precious) is but as a *heap*, full of confusion and deformity; the other as a *fabric* or building, much more excellent, both for *beauty* and *use.*†

§ 5. There may be divers kinds of methods prescribed, according as men's own fancies, and the variety of *subjects* and *occasions* shall require. But that which our best divines, by long experience, have found most *useful* for ordinary and popular assemblies, is that of *doctrine* and *use*. This, as to the nature of it, is very easy; and therefore most *natural*, being generally applicable to any subject. In its true latitude, it is as full and comprehensive as any other, including all such notions as are any way useful and proper. In its branches and gradations it is perfectly logical, putting homogeneous things together, handling generals first, and particulars after.* The principal scope of a divine orator should be, to teach clearly, convince strongly, and persuade powerfully; and suitable to these are the chief parts of a sermon, *Explication*, *Confirmation*, and *Application*.

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* H. ALSTEDII *Theologia Prophetica,* Par. I. Cap. x.

† See WATTS's Improvement of the Mind, Part II. Ch. vi. *passim.*

§ 6. Besides these more essential parts, which belong to the very nature and *substance* of a sermon, there are other *less principal* parts not to be neglected, which concern the *external form* of it: such as the *Preface*, *Transitions*, and *Conclusion*.

The first thing to be entered upon in this fabric of method, is the Porch or *Preface;* which is not always necessary in every common structure, but only when some extraordinary occasion requires it, or by reason of some special reference which the text may have to that particular time and auditory; and then it should be *clear*, *pertinent*, and *short;* as being a thing by the bye, and such as may quicken attention to the discourse.

The most general and effectual *matter* for a preface, and what was so commonly used by the prophets of old, is, to persuade the hearers that it is the *Word of God* which is spoken to them, which concerns their *everlasting happiness, and is able to save their souls;* that the ministers do but *stand in Christ's stead; that our receiving or despising of them shall be reckoned as done unto Christ himself;* which being believed and considered, will be a strong engagement on the hearers, unto those three qualifications which are the chief ends of prefacing, namely, to make them *favourable*, *teachable*,

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* In his Preface, our Author judiciously remarks, "The great end of preaching being either to *inform* or *persuade*, this may be most effectually done by such rational ways of *Explication* and *Confirmation*, as are most fit and proper to satisfy men's judgments and consciences. And this will in all times be accounted good sense, as being suitable to the reason of mankind; whereas all other ways are, at the best, but particular fashions, which, though at one time they may obtain, yet will presently vanish, and grow into disesteem." And we may add, That to this method may be reduced the most admired productions of ancient and modern eloquence.

*and attentive.**—To return to the more *essential* parts of good method:

§ 7. (i.) The first thing to be done is, the *opening of the text*, according to its proper sense and meaning; to which purpose, we may give some *brief explication* of so much of the context as may serve to clear the text, and shew its just dependence. Truths absolutely necessary to salvation are manifest; other truths, whether historical, doctrinal, or practical, may be sometimes involved in doubtful, difficult expressions. In the unfolding of which we must observe, that if the natural and most obvious signification of the words manifestly disagree with other perspicuous scriptures, then we are to seek for some meaning which must always be consonant with the words, and other circumstances of the place. In finding out this, we are not so much to consult with our own fancies; for *no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation;* but with the Holy Ghost himself, who best understands his own meaning.

All *difficult expressions* should be first examined according to their original and most authentic translations, which will often afford much light to the true meaning of them. Sometimes it may be of use to *consult* the different reading; though it will be generally needless to *mention* any various readings, translations, or interpretations of scripture to a common auditory, because it is apt to stagger them: and to raise doubts, rather than to confirm and settle them; but we should finally fix upon that, which, upon serious consultation, we conceive in our own judgments to be most congruous and pertinent.

The *circumstances* of the place will help much to illustrate a difficulty. The Rabbies have a saying, "*Nulla est objectio in lege, quæ non habet solutionem in latere;*" that is, There is not any doubt in the law, but may be resolved in the context. We must be careful that all our interpretations be agreeable with the *analogy of faith*, and other *parallel scriptures.* The consulting of these will be a good mean to preserve us from perverting the word of God, by any dangerous, heretical exposition.

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* Our Author must not be so understood, as if he required the *prefatory* part of a discourse to be *confined* to these topics.

Beware of that vain affectation of finding something *new* and *strange* in every text, though ever so plain. It will not so much shew our *parts* (which such men aim at) as our *pride*, and wantonness of wit.* These new projectors in divinity are the fittest matter out of which to shape, first a *sceptic*, after that an *heretic*, and then an *atheist.*

§ 8. There are divers texts that have a *double* sense; either Historical and *Literal*, or Typical and *Allegorical.* So those places concerning the brazen serpent;† Jonah in the whale's belly;‡ Abraham's two wives and sons, Sarah and Isaac, Hagar and Ishmael;§ the law concerning the muzzling of the ox that treads out the corn;¶ in all which there is some typical allusion primarily intended.

Allegorical interpretations may lawfully be used also, when there is no such natural *reference*, but merely a *fitness*, by way of similitude, to *illustrate* any doctrine. St. Paul gives an example for this.‖ But here we must observe these qualifications: we must use them *sparingly* and soberly; they must be *short* and *pertinent*, not forced and far fetched; and they must be *useful*, not for airy and unprofitable notions; as they are more proper for illustration than for proof.**

§ 9. It will be a great help for the understanding of the books of scripture, to know their several times, references, and order. The five *books of Moses* are as the first basis, by which the whole frame of scripture may be more easily apprehended. The other *historical books* that follow will explain themselves. The *Psalms*, most of them, in their occasions and historical grounds, refer to the books of *Samuel.* The *Prophets* are ordinarily divided into three ranks: those that prophesied *before the captivity*, who refer to the history in the books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, especially the second book; those that prophesied *in the captivity*, concerning whose times there is but little mention in the historical parts of canonical scripture; and those that prophesied *after the captivity;* unto whom the history of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* hath some reference. And so in the New Testament, the *Epistles*, many of them, refer to the story of the *Acts of the Apostles.* As for the ranking and succession of the books in Scripture, they were not written in the same order as they are placed. The right apprehension of these general notions concerning the proper times and order of several books, may be one good help to the true interpretation of Scripture.*

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* Bishop **REYNOLDS** on Self-Denial.

† Num. xxi. 9. John iii. 14.

‡ Jonah i. 17. Matt. xii. 44.

§ Gen. xxi. Gal. iv. 22.

¶ Deut. xxv. 4. 1 Cor. ix. 9.

‖ 2 Cor. ii. 13, 15. Eph. iv. 32.

** Our Author, in his Preface, very justly complains, "that some men *divert* their hearers with little tricks about words and phrases, or *amuse* them by pretending to discover some deep mystery in every metaphor or allegory of scripture; which are such pitiful shifts, as men who understand the true reason of things ought to be ashamed of." In exposing these "pitiful shifts," Dr. **STENNETT** has done good service to the churches, in his excellent Sermons on *the Parable of the Sower.*

§ 10. Next to the unfolding of any abstruse and difficult sense, we are to consider likewise the very words and phrases; amongst which, if there be any ambiguous, they must be distinguished and applied according to their proper signification in the text. *Tropes* and *figures* should be reduced into their natural meaning.

As for the *division* of the *text*,† it will be needless, unless either the explication of terms, or the deduction of doctrines from the several parts requires it. That common practice of dissecting the words into minute parts, and enlarging upon them severally, is a great occasion of impertinency; and roving from the chief sense.

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* There are few expositors of note, who do not in their *prefaces* to the several books of scripture, attend to the circumstance of *Chronology.*—USHER's Annals of the Old and New Testament is a book of great and deserved reputation on this head.

† Meaning a *grammatical, metaphysical* or any other *formal* division of the *text*, before coming to the subject; a fault we often meet with in some valuable as well as other writings.

§ 11. The text having been thus unfolded, the next thing to be done is the inferring of *observations* from it, which should always follow from the words by a strong logical consequence. The wresting of scripture into improper truths may easily occasion the applying of them to gross falsehoods.

These *observations* may be of several kinds; either *mediate*, and more remote; or *immediate* and principal. Of the first kind are such as are raised from the *occasion*, *connection*, *manner*, *circumstances*, *order*, or *denomination* of the text; as, whether it be a precept, exhortation, threat, promise, petition, deprecation, similitude, &c. All which may afford several hints of instruction, fit sometimes to be taken notice of: though these points should be only touched upon briefly, by the bye; and those only insisted upon largely which we conceive to be most agreeable under the principal immediate scope of the Holy Ghost in that scripture.

And these observations must be laid down in the most easy, *perspicuous phrase* that may be; not obscured by any rhetorical or affected expressions; for if the hearers mistake the chief subject, all that follows will be to little purpose. The *doctrine* being mentioned (if there be any necessity) we may briefly clear the inference of it, by shewing its necessary dependence on the text.

§ 12. After this it will be convenient, in the most brief and plain expressions, to state the true sense and meaning of that subject we propose to insist upon.* The method of which will be various, according to the different nature of the subjects.

1. If it be *doctrinal*, concerning some proposition to be known or believed, this is to be explained (when

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* The method now recommended is clearly exemplified by President Edwards. Perhaps no modern author follows the plan of composing sermons here proposed more generally and explicitly than the writer now mentioned. What were the moral and spiritual effects of his preaching, few of my readers, I presume, need information. After all, the young composer may find the popular sermons of Dr. Doddridge, and especially those of Mr. Robert Walker, more improving models.

there is occasion for it) by distinguishing the terms, and shewing in what sense they are to be understood, substituting words that are plain and proper, for such as are obscure and figurative; and by shewing with what limitations each word is to be taken.

2. If it be *practical*, concerning some virtue or duty to be done, or vice to be avoided; this may be explained by discussing the different names or appellations whereby things are expressed, in order the more accurately to distinguish betwixt them. Upon which account it may be proper, in some cases, to inquire in what various equivocal senses such words are used, and the synonymous terms, or such other kinds of words or phrases as are used to express the same thing, which sometimes will very much contribute to unfold the nature of it.

Again, in treating of *duty* we should discuss the nature of the thing; where the principal heads of matter are,

(1) The *causes* or *properties* by which a thing is to be *defined.* Some things are capable of a two-fold cause, moral and natural. That is said to be the moral cause of a thing, which, according to the several laws of divine justice, deserves that thing as its proper recompence.—That is said to be a natural cause, which, by its own proper efficacy, produces the effect.

(2.) The *kinds* or *parts* by which a thing is to be *divided*, for the better comprehending of its true extent, and the subordinate species or branches belonging to it. And,

(3.) The *opposites* and *affinities*, by which a thing is to be *illustrated.* The explaining of which will very much contribute to fix in our minds true notions concerning the nature of things.

§ 13. (ii.) The text, and the doctrine or subject to be insisted upon, being thus opened and explained; the next thing to be provided for is the *confirmation* of it; which ought to be connected by some plain and brief, but natural *transiton*, that so the method may be the more perspicuous.

Confirmation, in *doctrinal* matters, may be managed either by positive proofs, or the removing of objections;—by *positive proofs*, that is, divine and human testimony, but especially the authority of scripture, relating either to some direct affirmation or negation, or to some evident or probable consequence. The scriptures can best inform us what is true and false; yet human records can sufficiently acquaint us with matters of fact, telling us what is new, and what is ancient, &c. But, in the managing of this part, care is to be taken, that *Hagar* the hand-maid do not out-brave her mistress *Sarah;* that blear-eyed *Leah* be not preferred before beautiful *Rachel.* To stuff a sermon with citations of authors, and the witty sayings of others, is to make a feast of vinegar and pepper; which are healthful and delightful being used moderately as sauces, but must needs be very improper and offensive to be fed upon as diet.

Proofs from *reason* should be of so much perspicuity and strength, as may be sufficient to convince the judgment. In the pressing of which, men ought to be very cautious not to lay more weight upon the conclusion than the premises will bear; not to represent that as a necessary consequence, which is at best but highly probable. The neglect of this often proves very prejudicial to truth, by working in men prejudices against it, instead of gaining them over to it.

When a proposition is confirmed by positive proofs, the next thing to be done is the *removing of doubts and objections* that may be made against it; in the doing of which, such doubts only ought to be taken notice of as are most obvious and material; and much caution is to be used that the answer be made as plain and full as the objection.

§ 14. In *practical* points, the proofs from divine testimony are capable of these three heads for enlargement,—*precepts* or *prohibitions*,—*commendations* or *dispraise*,—*promises* or *threats*. To one of which all the pertinent scriptures may be reduced.

1. The *precepts* or *prohibitions*. The affirmative precepts enjoining such a duty, or the negative ones, pro-

hibiting what is contrary to it. It is a sufficient foundation of duty, when one who hath dominion over us, and a just right or power to command us, requires any thing from us; because in such cases our obedience and subjection are due as a natural homage. Now, *in Deo omnia jura et omnes tituli concurrunt;* and upon what account soever any man may be supposed to be in a superior relation to another, so as to challenge subjection from him; upon infinitely more hath God a right to command and govern us. He is our Maker, our Redeemer, our King, our Father, our Master, our Husband, our Patron and Benefactor; and therefore every one ought most freely to submit to whatever he shall please to enjoin.

These precepts are, for the manner of them, sometimes delivered with a peculiar emphasis. Besides plain injunctions, there are vehement inculcations, wishes, interrogations, and expostulations, of which men ought to take particular notice.

2. *Commendations* or *dispraise.* The commendations that are given to such a grace or duty, together with the dispraise and reproach that belong to the want of it, or the opposites to it. One of the principal topics for persuasion, whence moral inducements and motives are to be derived, is the loveliness of things, (οσα προσφιλη, οσα ευφημα,) *whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report,* if there be any praise (ταυτα λογιζεσθε), *have these things in estimation.** There is in all men a sort of natural good will and inclination towards things of this nature; and therefore that is another proper way for persuasion or dissuasion, by representing things as being in themselves lovely and excellent, or deformed and odious. These generally refer either to the *nature* of a thing, what it is; or to the *effect* of it, what it does.

3. *Promises* or *threats:* The promises that are made to any duty, together with all those instances of blessing

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* Phil. iv. 8.

and happiness, which have accordingly befallen such as have been observant of it: and the threats and judgments denounced and executed upon the neglect of it.

Now, rewards and punishments being the great enforcements of laws, from which they derive their force and obligation, we may, by the quality and nature of these, discern the importance of the duty or offence to which they are applied. When God shall promise all that he can give, or we can hope for; when he shall threaten the utmost that he can inflict, or we can fear; it signifies that the matter, to which such great promises and threats are annexed, is of the highest moment and consequence.

§ 15. The arguments from *reason*, in confirmation of these practical points, should be rendered so plain and so cogent, as may be sufficient to satisfy any teachable man, concerning the fitness or necessity of what we would persuade to, whether upon the account of duty or interest.

1. *Duty;* to be made out from the nature of the thing itself, which by the principles of reason will appear to be part of that *subjection* which we owe to any superior powers; and of that love and service which we owe to the common good of the societies or persons to whom we are related. And this, being founded upon the notions of true and false, right and wrong, belongs therefore to the conviction of the judgment.

2. *Interest;* or the advantage accruing to ourselves by it; which, being founded upon the consideration of good and evil, doth therefore belong to the exciting of the will and affections, and may more properly be styled motives. And because those affections that chiefly influence the inclinations and actions of men, are love and hatred, hope and fear, therefore one proper way of persuasion or dissuasion is, by representing a thing as being for or against a man's interest, either temporal, spiritual, or eternal: *Temporal*, with respect to health, profit, honour, pleasure, peace, or safety: *Spiritual*, the subduing or avoiding of corruptions and temptations, the increasing or strengthening of our graces and com-

forts; *Eternal*, by securing and confirming to us that blessed hope of future glory and happiness: Or, on the contrary, by declaring the danger, loss, prejudice, mischiefs of all kinds, flowing from and belonging to those vices from which we dissuade.

§ 16. The next proof to be insisted upon is *experience*, or that practical knowledge to which men attain by observing the usual course of things in the world. And this, being a kind of sensible evidence, must needs be powerful for conviction; when we can appeal for the truth of what we assert to the observation of any considerate man, who hath been careful to take notice of the usual course of things. And this may generally be used, in giving evidence to all those several kinds of advantages or mischiefs which flow from virtue or vice.

Not that any evident position or consequence from scripture needs all this proof in itself; but the better to instruct us in the agreement and harmony of sacred writ, and the more powerfully to convince the judgment, which in some cases will be apt to find out evasions, whereby to delude itself and escape conviction; whereas we shall embrace any doctrine with a stronger assent, and rest upon it with the whole bent of our affections, when it comes in upon us with a full stream of evidence. But here we are to remember, that the long insisting on a confessed truth, is apt to nauseate and flatten the attention.

§ 17. (iii.) Having thus passed over the *doctrinal part*, in the *Explication* and *Confirmation* of the words and subject, we are in the next place to descend to the *Application* of them, which is the life and soul of a sermon; whereby these sacred truths are brought home to a man's conscience, and particular occasions, and the affections engaged in favour of any truth or duty.

The application is frequently mentioned by several authors, according to a double acceptation; sometimes it is taken more strictly, as distinguished from the uses, and refers only to those particular passages of them which more especially concern the present time and auditory. Sometimes it is taken more largely, as it comprehends all the uses that are inferred from the doctrine. And so I understand it in this place.

In enlarging here we should observe this caution that the several heads or uses we are to insist upon must not be handled in a general notional way, as in the doctrinal parts; but in such a *home* and *applicatory* manner, as may have some peculiar reference to the hearers. And the chief rules or canons that concern this part are these two:

1. Every scripture does affirm, command or threaten, not only that which is expressed in it, but likewise all that which is rightly deducible from it, though by mediate consequences.

2. An example, (i. e. every good one) hath the force of a rule; all of them being *written for our learning.** But then we must be careful to examine and discern whether the example be *extraordinary* or *ordinary;* according to which the application must be properly made.

The apostle tells us, that the whole scripture is given by inspiration from God, and is profitable (προς διδασκαλιαν,) *for doctrine*, (προς ελεγχον,) *for redargution*, (προς επανορθωσιν,) *for correction;* (προς παιδειαν,) *for instruction* in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, being thoroughly instructed in every good work.† In that place all the uses to which scripture may be applied are briefly set down.

§ 18. Application is either Doctrinal or Practical. *Doctrinal application* is, for our information in some truth to be known or believed, which must follow from the doctrine before delivered and confirmed by a natural and just consequence, as that doctrine does from the text. And this is of two kinds:

1. *Didactical*, in some *positive truth*, (προς διδασκαλιαν) which is commonly styled a use of *information;* and should consist of such pertinent doctrinal truths as will most properly follow from the observation. In the deducing of these, it would be an endless business to take in all those inferences that are remote or collateral; but

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* Cor. x. 11.

† 2 Tim. iii. 16.

we should insist upon some few that are more principal and immediate. Where those directions may be useful which concern the collecting—of a *general* from a *special.**—The *less* from the *greater.*† The *greater* from the *less.*‡ The *effect* from the *cause,* § and the *cause* from the *effect.*||

2. *Elenchtical,* (προς ελεγχον) in some *controverted point,* which is usually called an use of *confutation;* for the refuting of such erroneous positions as subvert the truth. Where it will be needless to raise up any such obsolete errors as now lie dead, and do not trouble the church; but such only ought to be taken notice of, as being pertinent to the subject in hand, do most infest the present times, and the places wherein we live.

And herein we ought to be especially careful, that we manage these polemical discourses with good arguments and much meekness: With solid pressing arguments; making our answers as clear as the objections; for if *these* be plain, and *those* perplexed, instead of confuting, we shall rather confirm the error. With much meekness and lenity in differences not fundamental.¶ Soft words and hard arguments are the most effectual way to convince.

§ 19. *Practical application* is (προς επανορθωσιν) *for correction;* or (προς παιδειαν) *for instruction.*

1. For *correction of manners,* commonly styled a use of reproof, terror, and dehortation; to dissuade and alarm transgressors from any sinful course. In urging this, much prudence is necessary in distinguishing betwixt sins of infirmity, and sins of wilfulness and frowardness; and accordingly in proportioning the severity of our reproofs. In all reprehensions, we must express rather our *love* than our *anger,* and strive rather to *convince* than to *exasperate.* If the case require any special indignation, it must be the zeal of a displeased *friend,* rather than the bitterness of a provoked *enemy.* It implies too much levity, to check men in an ironical,

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* Rom. iv. 3, 4.

† John x. 25.

‡ 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10.

§ Heb. ii. 8.

|| John vi. 45, &c.

¶ 2 Tim. ii. 25.

jeering way; and too much rashness, to reprove them in a furious, revengeful manner.

This use should be more especially directed against the *particular sins* of the times and places wherein we live. And because in itself it may be very displeasing to the guilty hearers, which will much counteract the power and operation of it, we should therefore sweeten it by some gentle insinuations, wherein it might appear that it proceeds from our affection and care of their welfare; that there is a necessity of insisting upon it, both from our duties, and their danger.

The proper heads for *amplification of this use* are two-fold, Dissuasive and Directive. *Dissuasion* may be amplified by mentioning those several aggravations belonging to the sin we would dissuade from; whether such as concern its nature, or its effects: The *nature* of it, in respect of *unreasonableness*, *deformity*, the difficulty of serving it, the facility of leaving it; which may be further evidenced by comparing it with some other sin, which the persons concerned hate and scorn; which yet may be made to appear either very *like*, or it may be *less* than what they are guilty of, and from which we would dissuade them: The *effects* of it, how much it will prejudice our well-being in this world, with respect to those judgments of sickness, poverty, infamy, unpleasantness, danger, and trouble: and what a hindrance it will be as to our hopes of future happiness. It may be proper to recapitulate some of the most material things to this purpose, before insisted upon in the doctrinal part, concerning the dispraise belonging to such a sin, together with the threats and judgments denounced and executed upon it. All which should be so ordered, as to the manner of it, as may prove most effectual to work in men *shame* and *detestation* for their vices, *compassion* for themselves, *repentance* for their past offences, and greater *circumspection* for the future.

The *Directive part* should mention the impediments that hinder, and the means or helps whereby we may be enabled to avoid and overcome any sin. It is not enough for the physician to inveigh against the malignity or danger of a disease, but his chief care must be to direct to the remedy and cure of it. And for this, the prescription must be varied, according to the several kinds of offences. This directive part is also applicable to the use of exhortation; only here is the difference, that in this place it properly belongs to *dissuasion*, in the other to *persuasion*.

§ 20. 2. Practical application is (προς παιδειαν,) *for instruction* in righteousness, unto every good work; which may include Consolation and Exhortation.

(1.) A use of *Consolation* is, when we apply the comforts that rise from any doctrine to the particular state and consciences of our hearers. This is one main end of the scriptures, which were written for our learning, "that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."* And it should be the special care of a minister, to attend (τη παρακλησει,) to *Consolation*,† (as the word may signify) like a wise physician, to apply *lenitives* and *cordials*, where the condition of the patient requires it, as well as corrosives and purgatives.

The matter of this may be various, according to the different states of men, whether their sufferings be Outward or Inward. *Outward*, in respect of sickness of body, loss of friends, estate, credit, peace and quiet, &c. In which cases it may be proper to suggest several considerations from,—*the nature of God*, his wisdom, goodness, power, &c.—*the nature of man*, in respect of his frailty and guilt; the need that he stands in of trouble and chastisement, as his proper physic;—and, *from the nature of afflictions*, which are not evil in themselves, but *secundum modum recipientis*. They are all of them either short, or light, or both, *si longa, levis; si gravis, brevis*. There is a natural aptitude in such things, to quicken our relish of the mercies we enjoy, and to increase our thankfulness for them; to wean us from the world, to prevent the snares of prosperity, to enlarge our experience, to contract such a kind of hardiness as become, a militant state, &c.

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* Rom. xv. 4.

† 1 Tim. iv. 13. See Isa. xl. 1.

The matter of consolation may also refer to *inward* sufferings, in respect of doubts and desertions; in which case (besides those more general heads of consolation above mentioned) it may be proper to speak something more particularly from the *promises* in scripture, and *experience*, either our own or other men's, in the like case: together with some plain and brief *solutions* of such particular scruples as are most pressing.

In all afflictions, whether outward or inward, we should endeavour to cheer up the dejected hearer, by proposing suitable comforts, by raising his thoughts from *sense* to *faith*, from *present* things to *future;* pressing upon him the consideration of God's *wise providence*, by which all things are disposed for the best; his sure promises in Christ, by whom we may certainly enjoy plentiful redemption and eternal glory. And though, for the present, the way of piety, may seem to be full of trouble and opposition, yet it is most safe in the issue; and the day of redemption draws nigh, when the good shall be delivered from all their sufferings, and every man shall receive according to his work.

§ 21. (2.) A use of *Exhortation* is for the exciting and quickening of our affections unto any grace or duty. It is so principal a part of preaching, that sometimes a whole discourse is called *exhortation.** The chief end of an orator is to *persuade:* and therefore that preacher, who in his discourses only flourishes in general notions, and does not aim at some particular argument, endeavouring to press upon his auditory the belief or practice of some *truth* or *duty*, is like an unwise fisher, who spreads his net to the empty air, where he cannot expect any success of his labours.

This use hath two common heads of amplification; Motives to persuade, and Means to divert.

1. *Motives* should be such as most probably and powerfully work upon the *affections*, and therefore are derivable from these two general topics; of Benefit in doing it, *honestum*, *utile*, *jucundum;* and Hurt or Danger

* Acts xiii. 15.

in neglecting it, *malum*, *inutile*, *amarum;* which are capable of many subordinate branches; the design of application being to bring down general truths to particular cases. It cannot therefore be improper, in this part, to repeat some of the most material things to this purpose, which were before enlarged upon in the doctrinal part, under the general head of *reason* from *interest.*

These things may sometimes be the more effectually pressed, by adding to them some affectionate obsecrations, like those of the blessed Apostle, "I beseech you brethren by the mercies of God."* "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, &c."†

2. *Means* or Directions should consist of such particulars as may best conduce to the attaining of any grace, or the performance of any duty. And these may be either General, or more Special: *General;* as prayer, seeking it from God, who is the fountain of all good; setting apart some solemn time for our more particular inquiry after it; improving our abilities and opportunities to this purpose, &c. More *special;* according as the nature of several subjects shall require, and scriptures or experience direct.

These are the chief uses to which scriptures may be applied. They are frequently mentioned under more and different names; but they are all reducible to these heads. It is not necessary they should be all insisted upon in every sermon, but only such of them as may be most suitable to the text, and seasonable to the time and auditory.

§ 22. The *conclusion* should consist of such matter as may engage the hearers to a serious remembrance and consideration of the truths delivered, that they may revolve upon them, and be careful to renew that impression, which has thereby been made upon their souls by conference and meditation. To which purpose, as the *milder affections*, (τα ηθη,) best suit with the introduction, which insinuate into the love and attention of the hearers; so, (τα παθη) the more *vehement affections* will best become the conclusion, as supposing then we have won the cause we contended for, and convinced and persuaded the auditory beyond all opposition. And therefore here it will be proper to recapitulate some of the most effectual arguments, which may leave the hearers moved and stirred up in their affections.

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* Eph. iv. 1.

† 2 Tim. iv. 1.

Thus much briefly concerning the most easy *method*, and true logic of a sermon, which was the first thing proposed to be discussed, and being rightly understood, may be a very great help to facilitate this service of preaching.

§ 23. (II.) The next general head to be insisted upon, is concerning the invention of MATTER, where there are two things considerable; the *seasonableness* of it to the time and auditory; and the *pertinency* of it to the text, or subject we are to treat of.

1. The *first* of these must be left to the prudence of the minister, in distinguishing times and emergencies, in applying himself to the several conditions and necessities of his hearers, whether they are to be taught and instructed in some necessary truth, or to be excited to some necessary duty. To which purpose, he must consider, whether the generality of his hearers be either ignorant or knowing; whether enemies to religion, or professors of it; whether merely formal, or truly pious; whether more cheerful and zealous, or more cold and sluggish: according to which variety, his doctrine and expressions must be variously suited. To use the same matter and manner in all auditories, is as if a person should make all wearable goods of an equal size, for children and men, large and small; there being as much difference betwixt their inward gifts and necessities, as betwixt the outward statures. As in other invitations, we carve that to the guests which is most suitable to their several palates and appetites; so in these spiritual feasts, we should be careful to fit our preparations to the capacity and edification of the hearers. This is the meaning of the Holy Ghost, in that expression (ορθοτομειν

*τὸν λογον,) rightly to divide the word of truth;** when the preacher, like a faithful steward, proportions his dispensations according to the exigencies of the family; when like a wise physician, he fits his prescriptions according to the several necessities of his patients. This is to have "the tongue of the learned,"† which knows how to speak a word in due season.

2. The matter must be *pertinent* and natural to the subject we are to insist upon. For want of skill in the invention of this, many preachers (especially young beginners) are very apt to complain of much dryness and slowness in their composures, and to take any hint of flying out into impertinent amplifications, not being able to enlarge and keep close to their text. Now there is a three-fold remedy against this; *Prayer*, *Reading*, and *Meditation*. By the *first*, we must be prepared and directed both in our judgments and affections: by the *second*, we may inform and furnish ourselves with materials: by the *third*, we may digest them into the most proper way for the edification of others. *Lectio inquirit*, *Oratio postulat*, *Meditatio invenit*, *Contemplatio degustat:*‡ Reading inquires, Prayer desires, Study and Meditation discover and digest.

1. *Prayer;* that God would direct and enable us for the particular service that lies upon us. It was an usual saying of LUTHER, *Bene orasse est bene studuisse;* he always found himself in best temper for study, when he had first composed his thoughts, and raised up his affections by prayer. And certainly the weightiness of the service may justly deserve this preparation. For if queen *Esther*, if *Nehemiah*, being to speak to an earthly king, for the temporal safety of their people, did first prepare themselves this way; much more then should ministers, who are to be ambassadors from the great God concerning that weighty business of men's eternal salvation.

2. *Reading*. It was the Apostle's advice to *Timothy*, "Give attendance to reading."§ And he says, that it is

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* 2 Tim. ii. 15. † Isa. l. 4.

‡ AUGUSTIN de scalis parad. cap. ii.

§ 1 Tim. iv. 13.

the study of the scriptures which must make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished.[*] If this were necessary in those primitive times; when men were extraordinarily inspired with special gifts; much more now; when we cannot expect any immediate infusion, but must apply ourselves to the natural proper means of attaining any ability.

3. *Meditation* and *Study;* "Meditate on these things, give thyself wholly to them;[†] (εν τȣτοις ισθι) *be in them;* which phrase implies much intention and industry in our studies. DEMOSTHENES would have such an one branded for a man pernicious to the commonwealth, who durst propose any thing publicly which he had not before-hand seriously pondered. What impudence is it then, in the great business of salvation, when a man appears before the church, angels, and God himself, to discourse in a loose, irreverent manner; so as to nauseate, and even to counteract the devotion and attention of the hearers, and thus to prostitute the esteem and authority of that sacred ordinance![‡]

§ 25. But now because amongst those helps of invention which fall under the rules of art, this of *reading* is one of the principal; therefore it will deserve particular consideration. There are two things which in our reading and study may be of great advantage, viz. *Good books*, and a *right series* of matter to be first and most exactly inquired into.

There is no external help more effectual to direct a man to pertinent, useful matter, upon all subjects and occasions, than a *well chosen library*, wherein, upon any emergent doubt or difficulty, he may have recourse to the advice of grave and learned men, who (it may be) have bestowed a great part of their time and study in the solution of that particular question into which he hath occasion to inquire.

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[*] 2 Tim. iii 17.

[†] 1 Tim. iv. 5.

[‡] Let such rash persons consider, Qualis sit res ovile Christi, quam pulchra et Deo grata sit ovium Christi societas, in cujus medio Dominus ille est, cui sol et luna famulantur, cui adsunt ministri ejus millia millium et decies centena millia! Quantæ molis est regnum Christi erigere, et Satanæ palatia demoliri! NIC. HEMMING. *De Pastore.*

There are many men whose natural parts would extremely improve, and grow very eminent, if they had but the knowledge and help of such authors as are most suitable to their genius and employment; whereas, on the other hand, their abilities are much damped, and kept low, while they are confined only to a scanty, ill-chosen library. There is as much art and benefit, in the right choice of those books with which we should be most familiar, as there is in the selection of friends or acquaintance, with whom we may most profitably converse.

And this knowledge of books, as it is in itself a very specious part of learning, making oftentimes a more pompous shew than the knowledge of things; so it is likewise of very great use and advantage. For the attaining of this, the most proper, effectual mean is, our own study and experience in the works of several authors. But because that is a business of vast industry and much time, scarce consistent with the frequent returns of public service required of a constant preacher, unless before-hand he be qualified for this by his education and leisure; therefore, there is another help to expedite our inquiries of this kind; namely, the perusal of such books as give a particular account of all authors, the times when they lived, the works they have published, with the several subjects they have insisted upon, their editors, translations, &c.[*]

§ 26. (III.) The third and last point to be insisted upon is concerning Expression; in which there are two things to be considered, *Phrase* and *Elocution*. The phrase should be plain, full, wholesome, and affectionate.

1. It must be *plain* and *natural;* not darkened with

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[*] Instead of detaining the reader in the body of the work, as the original does, by a tedious enumeration of *books* and *authors*, we refer him to an *Appendix* on this subject, at the end of the volume.

the affectation of scholastic harshness, or rhetorical flourishes. Obscurity in the discourse, is an argument of ignorance in the mind. The greatest learning is to be seen in the greatest plainness. The more clearly we understand any thing ourselves, the more easily can we expound it to others. When the notion itself is good, the best way to set it off, is in the most obvious, plain expression. St.Paul often glories in this, that his preaching "was not in wisdom of words, or excellency of speech; not with enticing words of men's wisdom, not as pleasing men, but God, who trieth the heart."* A minister should speak "as the oracles of God."† And it will not become the majesty of a divine embassage, to be garnished out with flaunting, affected eloquence.‡ How unsuitable is it to the expectation of a hungry soul, that comes to this ordinance with a desire of spiritual comfort and instruction, there to hear only a starched speech, full of puerile rhetoric! It is a mark of low thoughts and designs, when a man's chief study is about the polishing of his phrase and words.

§ 27. 2. It must be *full;* without empty and needless tautologies, which are to be avoided in every solid business, much more in sacred. Our expressions should be so close and appropriate, that they may not be obscure; and so plain, that they may not seem vain and tedious. To deliver things in a crude, confused manner, without digesting them by a previous meditation, will nauseate the hearers, and is as improper for the edification of the mind, as raw meat is for the nourishment of the body.

§ 28. 3. It must be *sound* and *wholesome;* not tainted with any erroneous, corrupt doctrine, or the affectation of novelty. False opinions many times insinuate themselves, by the use of suspicious phrases. And it is a dangerous fault, when men cannot content themselves with the wholesome form of sound words, but do altogether affect new light, and new language, which may in time destroy practical godliness, and the power of religion.*

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* 1 Cor. i. 17, ii. 4. 1 Thes. ii. 4.

† 1 Pet iv. 11.

‡ Non quærit æger medicum eloquentem, sed sanantem. Quid mihi lusoria ista proponis? Non est jocandi locus, ad miseros vocatus es, opem te laturum naufragis, captis, ægris, intentæ securi subjectum præstantibus caput, quo diverteris? Quid agis?—Cujuscunque orationem vides politam et solicitam, scito animum in pusillis occupatum. Seneca, Epist. 6, 21, 49.

§ 29. 4. It must be *affectionate* and *cordial;* as proceeding from the heart, and an experimental acquaintance with those truths which we deliver, *Quod procedit e corde redit in cor.* It is a hard matter to affect others with what we are not first affected with ourselves.† It is said of John the baptist, that he was a *burning* and *shining* light. *Ardere* prius est, *lucere* posterius; ardor *mentis* est, lux *doctrinæ.* This is to speak in the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit and power. There is a common relation to this purpose of several learned men, who, having a great while, with much argument and strength of reason, contended with another about persuading him to be baptized, he, being learned also, could still evade all their arguments: at length, a grave pious man amongst them, of no note for learning, stands up, and bespeaks him with some downright affectionate expressions, which wrought so effectually upon the other, that he presently submitted; yielding this reason, "Dum audiebam rationes humanas, humanis rationibus repugnabam; cæterum simul atque audivi spiritum loquentem, cessi spiritui." And it is reported of Junius, before his conversion, that, meeting once with a countryman as he was on a journey, and falling into discourse with him about various points of religion, he observed the plain fellow to talk so experimentally, with so much heartiness and affection, as made him first begin to think, that sure there was something more in those truths than his notional human learning had yet discovered; which occasioned his more serious enquiry into them, and afterwards his conversion. Such great power is there in these *cordial expressions.*

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* 1 Tim. vi. 3, 20. 2 Tim. i. 13. Tit. ii. 7.

† Præcipuum ad persuadendum est amare quod suades: Amanti pectus ipsum suggerit orationis ardorem.

§ 30. As for the manner of *composing* sermons, it will not be convenient for one that is a constant preacher, to pen all his discourses, or to tie himself to phrases. When we have the matter and notion, or *subject* and *method* well digested, the expressions of it will easily follow; whereas, to be confined to particular words, besides the great oppression of the memory, will likewise much prejudice the operations of the understanding and affections. The judgment will be much weakened, and the affections become dull, when the memory is over much burdened. A man cannot ordinarily be so much affected himself (and consequently he cannot so easily affect others) with what he speaks by rote, as when he takes some liberty to prosecute a matter according to his more immediate apprehensions of it. Many particulars may be suggested, that were not before thought of, when he expatiates upon any subject, according to the workings of his own affections, and the various alterations that may appear in the auditory. And then, besides, this liberty will breed, (παρρησια,) such a fitting *confidence*, as should be in that orator, who is to have power over the affections of others, of which such an one is scarce capable, who shall so servilely tie himself to particular words and expressions, from which he dares not vary, for fear of being out.

But a man cannot expect a *good habit* of preaching thus, without much study and experience. Young beginners should use themselves to a more exact and elaborate way; when a good style and expression is first learned by penning, it will afterwards be more easily retained in discoursing.*

§ 31. In the *elocution*, there are two extremes to be avoided; too much boldness, and too much fear.

1. Against too much rashness and *boldness*, consider the special presence of God and angels, the solemn dignity of those sacred mysteries with which we are intrusted, the weighty business of saving souls; and "who

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* For further direction in the *composition* of Sermons, see Disc. vii. of this volume.

can be sufficient for these things?" It was an usual saying of **Luther**, "Etsi jam senex, et in concionando exercitus sum, tamen timeo quoties suggestum conscendo." And he found by experience, that when he was most distrustful of his own preparations, then were his labours accompanied with some special blessing and efficacy; and, on the other hand, when he was most confident, then he failed most.

2. Against too much *fear*, consider, that it does not become the business we are about; we should speak the word with boldness; God has promised his assistance, that his strength shall appear in our weakness. It does not become the dignity or excellency of our calling; we are the angels, the ambassadors of God (*συνεγοι*,) his *fellow-workers*. And besides, this timorousness in the speaker will much hinder the efficacy and power of the word on the hearers. In brief, the most proper manner of elocution is with *modesty* and *gravity*, which will best suit our calling and business.[*]

To conclude; the observation of these helps and directions, together with frequent, diligent practice, will (as far as art can effect) quickly produce a good habit, and, by consequence, facility.

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[*] Dr. **Blair**, in perfect harmony with what our author inculcates, observes: "The chief characteristics of the eloquence suited to the pulpit, as distinguished from the other kinds of public speaking, appear to me to be these two, *gravity* and *warmth*. The serious nature of the subjects, belonging to the pulpit, requires gravity; their importance to mankind, requires warmth." See Lect. xxix. On, *The Eloquence of the Pulpit*, throughout; which, perhaps is one of the best of his admired performances and certainly to a preacher the most interesting.

THE

CHRISTIAN PREACHER, &c.

DISCOURSE II.

OF PREACHING CHRIST.

§ 1. *Introduction.* § 2. (I.) What regard a minister should have to CHRIST in his preaching. § 3. (i.) He should be the END of our preaching. § 4. Our *ultimate* end, his personal glory. § 5. The *subordinate* end, the advancement of his kingdom. § 6. To glorify the justice and long-suffering of Christ is also implied. § 7. All which must be sincerely *intended.* § 8. (ii.) Christ should be the MATTER of our preaching. § 9. (iii.) A continual REGARD to Christ should distinguish our sermons from discourses on mere natural religion. § 10. Particularly on the subject of *duties.* § 11. (1.) We should represent duty as the *fruit* of faith in, and love to Christ. § 12. (2.) Enforce duties with *motives respecting* Christ. § 13. (3.) To be performed by his *grace;* and § 14. (4.) Acceptable through his *merits.* § 15. (iv.) We should express our thoughts in a STYLE becoming the gospel of Christ. § 16. (II.) Some reasons, and motives to inforce the friendly admonition. (i.) It is the only way to *acceptance* and *communion* with Christ. § 17. (ii.) The only *way* to *win souls* to Christ. Which is, § 18. Confirmed by observation. § 19. (iii.) It is a direct imitation of the *apostles* of Christ. § 20. As appears from some of their discourses on duties the most moral. § 21. And the nature of the motives used. § 22. The Remonstrants reproved. § 23. (iv.) So only shall we deserve the name of CHRISTIAN PREACHERS. While some neglect the peculiarities of the gospel, and, § 24. Others do not promote holiness, § 25. The true christian preacher preserves both, and avoids all extremes. § 26. Yet, to arrive at any tolerable perfection is no easy task.

§ 1. PROFESSING ourselves christians, I hope, we are satisfied, upon careful and rational inquiry, that the religion of Jesus *comes from God;** and that it is a most glorious dispensation, no less for the sublime wonders of its doctrine, than the divine purity of its precepts. Now, in all the peculiar glories of this religion, CHRIST is interwoven like *Phidias's* name in the shield, which could not be effaced without destroying the shield itself; so that preaching *Christ*, and preaching the *gospel*, are, in scripture style, synonimous terms.

§ 2. (I.) To *preach Christ*, therefore, is our charge, our business, and our glory. But "who is sufficient for these things?" Give me leave, then, my dear brethren and friends, to remind myself and you, *What regard a minister should have to our* REDEEMER *in his preaching*.

§ 3. (i.) Let us make Christ the END of our preaching. If we seek principally to please men, then are we not the servants of Christ. If we look no farther than our own reputation, or temporal advantage, appropriating our talents to our own private use, how shall we make up our accounts to our divine Master?

§ 4. Our *ultimate* end should be the *personal glory* of Christ. That the glory of Christ, *as God*, is the ultimate end of the gospel, none can doubt; so that it is said of this divine Person, "All things are *for* him, as well as *by* him;* Is he not worth ten thousand of us?' Of more worth than the world; the only begotten Son of God, whom the highest angels adore? Now if the glory of Christ's person be the principal end in the divine schemes and actings, it should also be our highest view and design.*

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* Eminent writers on the *evidences of Christianity* are so numerous, that it is not easy to make a selection; but there is one publication, which, on account of its moderate size, force of reasoning, excellence of composition, and urbanity of manner, I wish warmly to recommend to the christian student and preacher, as richly deserving repeated perusal; I mean the DISSERTATION *on* MIRACLES, by the late Dr. GEORGE CAMPBELL, Principal of the Marischal College, *Aberdeen;* where the most daring and subtle objections of infidels are analysed, detected, and exposed, in an interesting and masterly manner. Third edit. one small vol. 12mo. Edinb. 1796. There is also a 4th edit. in 2 vol. 8vo. 1797, with additions, sermons, &c.

† Col. i. 16. Heb. ii. 10.

§ 5. Again, as the glory of Chist's *person* should be our *ultimate* end, so the advancement of his *kingdom of grace* among men should be our *subordinate* end. The immediate design of the gospel is the recovery of fallen creatures to holiness and happiness. Christ is "come into the world to save sinners;"† and he sends us to preach his gospel, in order "that men might live soberly, righteously, and godly, looking for the blessed hope."‡ We should not think it enough to inform, to amuse, to please, to affect, but we must aim farther to bring them to trust in Christ, to be penitent and holy; and every subject must be managed with this view. And let it be our great care, on a speculative subject, still to keep the end in view, and apply it practically.

§ 6. Let us by all means endeavour to save precious souls, but yet aim at a higher end, that we ourselves may be "a sweet savour of Christ unto God;"§ and then, though we miss of our secondary end, and are not as we could wish, "the savour of life unto life" to any great number, yet in being "the savour of death unto death to them that perish," we shall be the instruments of glorifying the justice and long suffering of Christ, and be witnesses for God, "that there has been a prophet amongst them." Our *primary* end is answered, "our labour is with the Lord," and we, in the mean time, are supported, "though Israel be not gathered," for "the word shall not return empty."

§ 7. Nay, further, it is not enough that the strain of our preaching be *adapted* to the true design of the gospel, but we must at heart sincerely *intend* it; otherwise, though our discourses be unexceptionable, and others be saved through our ministry, yet if our *designs* be wrong and base, we "shall be castaways."*

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* On the subject of these two sections, the reader is referred to Dr. OWEN's treatise, on *The person of Christ*, as a rich mine of scriptural information; and to his *Meditations on the glory of Christ*, which contain a savour of divine things truly delightful and enriching. See a just character of this last book in *Mr. Hervey's Theron and Aspasio*, vol. iii. p. 75, Lond. 1767.

† 1 Tim. i. 15.

‡ Tit. ii. 11—13.

§ 2 Cor. ii. 15.

§ 8. (ii.) Let Christ be the MATTER of our preaching. Let us display the divine dignity and loveliness of his *person*, as "God manifest in the flesh,"—unfold his *mediatorial* office, the occasion, design and purport of his great undertaking,—remind our hearers of the particulars of his incarnation, life, death, resurrection; ascension and intercession,—set forth the characters he bears, as a prophet, priest and king; as a shepherd, captain, advocate and judge. Let us demonstrate the sufficiency of his satisfaction, the tenor and excellence of the covenant confirmed with and by him, our justification by his righteousness, adoption through our relation to him, sanctification by his Spirit, our union with him as our head, and safe conduct by his providence; and how pardon, grace and glory accrue to the elect through his suretiship and sacrifice, and are dispensed by his hand. Let us declare and explain his most holy laws *in his name*, and teach the people whatever duties he has commanded, to God, our neighbour, and ourselves;—quicken the saints to duty, raise their hopes, establish and comfort their souls, by the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel, which *in him* are

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* A preacher may *sincerely intend* what is recommended, in different *degrees*, but he should aim at the *highest*, and cultivate an earnest and fervent manner, as well as firmness and gravity. And in order to improve this, he will find a frequent perusal of the most animating writers of great service. Among them I would reckon, after the Holy Scriptures, the works of Mr. GEORGE WHITEFIELD, particularly his Letters. In these he will discover a genius naturally sublime, raised by holy ardour, and supported by the wings of unabated zeal, fully bent on "the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom of grace among men," and crowned with success almost unparalleled. What *Alexander* and *Cæsar* were as warriors, that WHITEFIELD was as a christian evangelist; nor are the adventures and commentaries of the two former better calculated to excite the *martial flame*, than the life, journals, letters, and sermons of the latter to animate the *benevolent zeal* of the christian preacher.

"yea and amen."—I give but short and imperfect hints of these things, and refer to the apostolical writings, which are made up of discourses on these and such like topics.*

§ 9. (iii.) Let a continual REGARD to Christ distinguish our sermons on any subject from discourses on mere natural religion. If we speak of the perfections of God, let us consider them as shining in his Son, "who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and express image of his person,"† and exemplified in his undertaking. If we set forth gospel blessings and promises, let us consider them as purchased by a Saviour's blood, and distributed by his bounty; for "by his own blood he has obtained eternal redemption,‡ and from him the whole body is supplied."§ If we take notice of the providence of God, let us not forget that "all power is given to Christ, in heaven and in earth,"|| and that "he is head over all things to the church."¶ If by the terrors of the last judgment we persuade men, let "the wrath of the Lamb" be denounced, while the reckoning is represented as most dreadful for abused grace and a slighted Saviour; for "this is the condemnation."** And when we are assisting the *devotions* of the people, the same regard to Christ should be observed.

§ 10. When we are discoursing on the subject of *duty*, Christ as the most powerful motive, is by no means to be forgotten; for to persuade men to practice godliness is one of the most difficult parts of a minister's work. Men will hear a speculative discourse with a curious satisfaction, and attend to the displays of God's grace with some joy; nay, a Felix may tremble when judgment is preached. Many indeed will bear to *hear* of duty too; but to induce them to *practice* it, *hic labor, hoc opus*. Here we have need to call in all helps, and take all advantages, which the *gospel*, as well as the light of nature, can furnish. In other discourses we are rather attacking Satan's out-works, a blind and prejudiced understanding; but, in *practical* subjects, we assault his strongest fort, a corrupted will. We may gain the understanding on our side, and some share of the affections; but to subdue a perverse will, in favour of *practical* christianity, is not so easy a thing, that we can afford to spare any important motive or quickening consideration.* But here I must be more particular in explaining *how* we should regard Christ in preaching *duty*.

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* The young minister, who is desirous of making Christ the *matter* of his preaching, is requested to cultivate an intimate acquaintance, in addition to the apostolic writings, with Mr. I. AMBROSE's valuable work, entitled, *Looking unto Jesus*. Indeed his *complete works*, fol. Lond. 1701, deserve a *devout* perusal.

† Heb. i. 3.
‡ Heb. ix. 12.
§ Eph. iv. 16.
|| Matt. xxviii. 18.
¶ Eph. i. 22.
** John iii. 10.

§ 11. (1.) We should represent *duty* as the *fruit of faith* in Christ, and love to him. When by faith we behold a crucified Jesus, do we not tremble at the severity of God's justice, and hate those sins that occasioned his sorrows? When we consider that "by his stripes we are healed," can we forbear to love him who first loved us? Shall we not live to him that died for us? Can we have the heart to crucify him afresh?

From such actings of faith, and outgoings of love, flows that divine temper which constitutes the new creature, and lays the foundation of all right gospel obedience. Thus, therefore, let us continually trace gospel duties up to their fountain head, that the people may learn, that it is not outward reformation which will stand the test in the day of judgment, but an inward renewal of the soul; that "the tree must first be made good, before there can be any good fruit;" and that all must be done for Christ's sake, and flow from "faith working by love."*

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* In reference to what is advised in this and the following sections, our young preacher will do well to read, with devotion and care, those parts of Mr. MATTHEW HENRY's practical and incomparable Exposition, which relate to the subject he would preach upon. He will also find in the works of Mr. ARTHUR HILDERSHAM, his Exposition of Ps. l. and John iv. an uncommon degree of sacred skill, in recommending duty and practice from christian motives, worthy of assiduous imitation.

Perhaps this may be the most proper place to recommend a work lately published, viz. "A *Practical View* of the prevailing religious system of professed Christians, in the higher and middle classes in this country, contrasted with real christianity," by W. WILBERFORCE, Esq. a work, which, for excellency of plan, a strain of masculine eloquence, acuteness of discernment, and force of reasoning, and, above all, a spirit of sublime devotion, is not perhaps equalled in our language; nor is it a small part of its excellence that it represents duty, according to our author's advice, as the *fruit* of faith and love, enforcing obedience with motives respecting Christ, to be performed by his grace, and acceptable through his merits.

§ 12. (2.) Let us enforce duties with *motives respecting* Christ. As, grateful love to him should constrain us; fear of his wrath should awe us, if we would approve ourselves the disciples and followers of Christ, and enjoy communion with him; if we would promote his honour and interest, and possess joy and not confusion, at his appearing. Not that we should neglect any motives which the light of nature can furnish, and are level to the capacities of the people: for we have need enough of all; but if we go no further, our exhortations will want far the greatest part of their weight. We must "beseech and exhort by the Lord Jesus."†

§ 13. (3.) Let us inculcate duties, as to be *performed by the grace* of Christ; telling the people that our fruitfulness depends on our being ingrafted into this vine;—that there is no holy walk without being "led by the Spirit," and when we do good, it is not we, but the grace of God that is in us;—that out of a sense of weakness we are to be made strong, "through Christ strengthening us.

§ 14. (4.) Let us consider all good works as *acceptable through the merits* of Christ; and remind our hearers, that could we do all, we were but "unprofitable servants;" and that we must seek to be found at last not having our own righteousness, but that which is of God by faith.‡

§ 15. (iv.) Let us express ourselves in *a style becoming the gospel* of Christ; not with great swelling words of vanity, or in the style of the heathen sophists, or words that man's wisdom teacheth, and perhaps sound best in our own ears: but let us use, "great plainness of speech," and seek to find out such "acceptable words," as may best reach the understanding and affections of the bulk of an auditory.

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* Gal. v. 6.

† 1 Thess. iv. 1.

‡ Phil. iii. 9.

As for the affectionate part of a discourse, brethren, I suppose you allow, upon a view of ancient and modern learning, that the men of the east, and next to them the ancient Greeks, excelled in fire, and works of imagination; and yet the moderns, inhabiting milder western climates, even the French, from whom, on many accounts, we should expect the most of this sort, produce but an empty flash, in comparison with the solid heat of the ancients; and rather amuse us with little delicacies, than, by masterly strokes, command our whole souls. Now the scriptures are the noblest remains of what the East has produced, and much surpass the best of the Greeks in the force of their oratory. Let us, therefore, take their spirit and style, and thence borrow bold figures and allusions, strong descriptions, and commanding address to the passions. But I am prevented in all I would say on this important head, by the archbishop of *Cambray's Dialogues concerning Eloquence*, which I am as little capable of improving upon, as I am of commending them as they deserve.[*]

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[*] The sublime FENELON'S *Dialogues on Eloquence* are deservedly mentioned, by many writers of eminence, with a sort of respect bordering on veneration. And no wonder, for such a union of the sublime and simple, of learning and familiarity; of judicious criticism and happy illustration; such unaffected humility and warm benevolence, delicate taste and solid sense; and above all, such reverence for sacred things, blended with a subject so often employed by human vanity and pride, are superior excellences very rarely found.

Dr DODDRIDGE (Fām. Expos. on John xiv. 2. Improvem. Note) having alluded to a beautiful observation of this author, says, "This is the remark of the pious *Archbishop of Cambray*, in his incomparable *Dialogues on Eloquence;* which may God put it into the hearts of our *preachers* often and attentively to read!"——Another able judge on this subject thus expresses himself: "But what need I enter further into the detail of pulpit-eloquence? If

§ 16. (II.) And now, brethren, let me lay before you some reasons and motives, to back this friendly admonition concerning preaching Christ.

1. It is the only way to have our *labours accepted* of Christ, and to have *communion* with him in our work. Even *Paul* cries out, "Who is sufficient for these things?" With how much more reason may we do so? Does not our cheerful progress in our work depend on a divine *afflatus*, and the spirit dispensed by Christ? But if we take little notice of him in our preaching, and do not distinguish ourselves from the moral philosophers of the gentiles, how can we expect any more of this enlivening and encouraging presence of Christ than they had? Nay, we have less ground to expect it, if we slight wilfully so noble a revelation, with which they were never favoured.

§ 17. 2. It is the only way to *win souls* to Christ, and to make them *lively* christians. The success of the gospel is owing, certainly, no less to the power of its *motives*, than to the clearness, fulness, and purity of its *precepts*. These peculiar motives of the gospel have all such a respect to Christ, that they are enervated if HE be disregarded. The gospel is what God in his unfathomable wisdom has fixed upon, as the grand mean to reform mankind, and save them; and he seems in honour concerned to crown it with greater success than any other scheme whatsoever. "The preaching of Christ crucified is the power of God.* If, by suppressing a part, we maim the gospel, we can expect, in the nature of things, but a very defective success. Nay, may we not fear that God's honour is concerned, in such a case, to blast us while we labour almost in vain?

§ 18. Observation agrees with this theory. The great masters of reason, who have less regard to Christ

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you want to see the whole machinery and apparatus of it, display-ed in the completest manner, I refer you to the great and good Prelate of *Cambray's Dialogues* on that subject; who was himself the justest critic, and one of the best models of eloquence that I know" FORDYCE'S *Theodorus*, p. 150. Lond. 1755. For a brief but striking character of the eloquence of *Fenelon*, see the *Abbé Maury's* Principles of Eloquence. Sect. lv.

* 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

in their preaching, may, indeed, have a charm for one of an hundred, who have a taste for the beauties of fine reasoning, and be of use to them, while the bulk of an auditory is asleep. Alas! with what heart can we go on, entertaining two or three, whilst starving most of the souls in an auditory. May we not also observe a happier effect of a strain prudently evangelical on christians themselves; that they who sit under it are more lively, zealous, ready to every good work, and heavenly-minded, than those christians who have heard less of the gospel.

§ 19. 3. It is a direct *imitation of the apostles* of Christ. Christ himself, whilst upon earth, preached the gospel in parables, in a concealed manner, distantly; and with reserve. He could not so fully take the advantage of his resurrection, satisfaction, ascension, and the like, not yet done, made or proved. He had many things to say, which his disciples could not then bear, but he declares them afterward by his Spirit in his apostles. They therefore are the true pattern of our preaching *now*, after the mystery of redemption is brought to light, and hath its full evidence.

How then did the apostles preach Christ? It is endless to attempt a full detail of particulars; any part of the apostolical writings is authority sufficient to our purpose; and therefore I have been sparing in quotations all along, as needless to those who will look into these writings with this view. And here we do not desire to insist upon any passages in their writings, which may be supposed to be written for reasons peculiar to *that* age and country in which the apostles wrote, and in which perhaps we are not so much obliged to imitate them in our preaching; for what will remain, after all these are put out of the account, will, I am satisfied, be as full to our purpose, as those that are struck off.

§ 20. I shall then, by way of specimen, select some of the apostles' discourses on duties most moral only, where we are most apt to forget Christ, or a due respect to him; that it may at once appear that the apostles neither shunned the pressing of such *duties*, nor disregarded *Christ* in treating of them.

Honesty is pressed by these motives;—"The unrighteous, thieves and extortioners, shall not inherit the kingdom of God," (which, in the style of the New Testament, is *Christ's Kingdom* of grace and glory.)—That christians are "converted by the Spirit of Christ, and justified by his righteousness."*—*Chastity* is enjoined, as "our bodies are *members of Christ*, as we are one spirit with him, temples of the Holy Ghost, and bought with a price."†—*Alms-giving* is recommended, as it brings a large tribute of "praise to God for our subjection to the *gospel of Christ*—and Christ became poor for our sakes."‡—*Evil-speaking* is forbidden, because "we were foolish and wicked; but the grace of God has made the difference; not for our righteousness, but of his free mercy he has regenerated us, and given us his Holy Spirit, *through Jesus Christ*, by whom we are justified, and heirs of glory."**—Subjects are commanded to *obey magistrates*, because "the gospel is come, and we should *put on Christ Jesus*."††—*Husbands* are charged "to love their wives, as *Christ loved the church*."‡‡—The obedience of *wives* is urged, because "the husband is the head of the wife, *as Christ is the head of the church*."||||—*Servants* are exhorted to their duty, as they would "adorn the *doctrine of Christ*,—because *grace* so teacheth, and that we look for Christ's appearance, who gave himself for us that we might be holy."¶——Now what is there in these motives peculiar to one age or nation? Are not all these as good now as formerly? And are men so ready in their duty, that we have no need of them?

§ 21. Nay, it is worthy of observation, that the apostles do not confine themselves to motives peculiarly adapted to the duty they are pressing, and which serve to enforce one duty *rather* than another; but, as

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* 1 Cor. vi. 8.

† 1 Cor. vi. 15.

‡ 1 Cor. viii. & ix.

** Tit. iii. 2.

†† Rom. xiii.

‡‡ Eph. v. 25.

|||| Eph. v. 22.

¶ Tit. ii. 9.

you may see, when such proper motives are not at hand, they take, without any scruple, common or general ones, which will equally enforce any duty whatsoever.

And why should not *we* introduce the peculiarities of the gospel on all occasions, as frequently as the apostles did? If our schemes of theology will not allow us, we have reason to suspect we are in a different scheme from the apostles. Are we afraid that men will make perverse use of such doctrines as the apostles used for motives? The apostles chose to *venture* it, and why should not we? If we will not dare to preach such a gospel as may be perverted by men of corrupt minds to their own injury, we must not expect to be instruments of any good. If we are a "savour of life" to some, we must expect to be the "savour of death" to others, or not preach at all.

§ 22. I confess even the *Remonstrant* scheme (which, I think, considerably sinks the doctrines of grace) does allow room to regard Christ abundantly more than most preachers of that denomination do. I would meet them on their own principles; what hinders their frequently inculcating the merits of Christ, the depravity of our nature, the necessity of regeneration, the aids of grace, union and communion with Christ? These topics, it were to be hoped, might have their effect: but alas! how few of the *Remonstrants* improve, to advantage, so much of the gospel as they hold and receive. And it makes me less inclined to this scheme, that it so generally draws those that embrace it into a strain of preaching, even on practical subjects, so different from that of the apostles; and inclines them, I know not how, to suppress those glorious motives (which yet their own principles might allow) by which the apostles enforced gospel duties.*

§ 23. 4. So only shall we deserve the name of Christian preachers. *Only* did I say, I am afraid this may sound too harsh.——Come, let us put the matter as soft and candid as common sense will allow us. So shall we *most evidently* or *best* deserve this honourable title.

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* What our author considers as what *might* be done on the Remonstrant scheme, is *actually* done by the Arminian Methodists.

Whilst a preacher keeps off from the peculiarities of the gospel, and says nothing but what the light of nature would also suggest and authorize, give me leave to say, a stranger might possibly doubt whether he is a deist or a christian; the question is like an imperfect mathematical problem, which equally admits of different solutions.

Suppose the ghosts of PAUL and SENECA to come, mere strangers, into an assembly, where one is harranguing the people in this abstracted manner; I am apt to think SENECA would claim him as a philosopher of his own sect and religion. Now if PAUL should also make his claim to him as a minister of Christ, how could the question be decided, without allowing SENECA to be a preacher of Christ also?

§ 24. On the other hand, if a preacher insists upon even the peculiar and glorious truths of christianity, but so unhappily manages them, as not to lead people to holiness, and the imitation of Christ thereby; what is this to the grand and full purpose of preaching; or, to the ultimate design of the gospel? Such preachers are quite off that divine system which is calculated to destroy the works of the Devil, and to teach men sobriety, righteousness, and godliness. It is not only Christ *without us* we are to preach, but also Christ *in us*, and our putting on Christ Jesus, by a holy heart and life.

If the apostle JAMES should come again, and make a visitation to our churches, and hear such a preacher, he would imagine himself among such people as he writes against in his epistle; he would be apt, when the minister had done, in his zeal for Christ, to take the text in hand again, and supply what the preacher had omitted, viz. the *application:* and to say to the auditors, "Know ye not that faith without works is dead?" If the preacher should here interrupt him saying, 'Hold, spare your pains, the Spirit of God will make the application, and teach men holiness;'—would not JAMES reply, 'I and the rest of the apostles were taught to preach otherwise, and to give particular exhortations to duty; we judged we might as well leave it to the Spirit, without our pains, to reveal the doctrine, as to instruct men in the practice of the gospel.'

§ 25. Upon the whole, brethren, let it be our resolution to study and preach Christ Jesus. On this subject, there is room for the strictest reasoning, and most sublime philosophy; it deserves, invites, and inspires the strongest fire of the orator; in extolling Christ, we cannot shock the most delicate taste by over-strained *hyperboles;* here the *climax* may rise till it is out of sight; our *imagery* cannot be too strong and rich.

Should our Lord himself appear, and give you a charge at your entrance on the ministry, would he not say (what indeed he has said already) "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you to preach the kingdom of God; that every knee may bow to me, and every tongue confess me. Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and tell them, that without me they can do nothing; that when they have done all, they are unprofitable servants, and must be found in my righteousness. Become all things to all men; seek words which the Holy Ghost teacheth; that you may gain souls, and bring in my sheep, for whom I have laid down my life. If ye love me, feed my sheep. I have called you friends; do all in my name, and to my honour: so I will be with you always; and if you thus watch for souls, you shall give up your account with joy, at my appearing.——This is the preaching which, though it seem foolish to many, shall prove the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Cast forth the net on this side, and so may you expect to catch many souls. Be ye followers of my apostles, as they are of me, and in my name shall ye do wonders; if you preach me, I and mine shall therein rejoice; be not ashamed of my gospel, and I will not be ashamed of you."

§ 26. But to arrive at any tolerable perfection in preaching Christ, is a work of time, the result of a careful perusal of the scriptures, and studying the hearts of men. It requires the mortifying of the pride of carnal reason, a great concern for souls, and a humble dependence on the Spirit of God, with the lively exercise of devotion in our closets.

As for the reasoning part on the more agreed points of our religion, a young preacher sooner may get to considerable excellency; but the christian orator is longer in finishing. We may soon get necessary truths into our own minds, and come at minds of our size and taste; but by proper motives and ways to reach the souls of a different make and turn, even the lowest of the vulgar, is what very few quickly arrive at; but let us not despair; if we thus regard the Lord Jesus in our ministrations, we may very reasonably expect the assistance of his Spirit, and we shall be "able to do all things through Christ strengthening us.

THE
CHRISTIAN PREACHER, &c.

DISCOURSE III.

OF PARTICULAR AND EXPERIMENTAL PREACHING.

§ 1. Introduction. The complaint of preachers dwelling in *generals*, too well founded. § 2. (I.) WHEREIN CONSISTS the happy skill of DIVIDING THE WORD ARIGHT. 1. In going through the *variety* of gospel subjects. § 3. Some err by neglecting to enforce holiness and christian duties. § 4. Others err by neglecting the doctrines of grace. § 5. 2. In putting a thought in several *distinct views* for different purposes. § 6. An apostolic instance of it on the doctrine of justification. § 7. Commonly such distinct views are united in the same paragraph; as election and sanctification, grace and works. § 8. Another instance, where the scripture speaks of power and duty. § 9. Unskilful preachers deal entirely in one of these, and neglect the other. § 10. 3. In distinctly explaining and enforcing *particular duties*, and opposing *particular sins*. § 11. This illustrated. § 12. 4. In *particularly applying* to the *several cases* of the hearers. § 13. This instanced in the prophets and apostles. As to men's knowledge and obedience. § 14. They reprove and confute § 15. Denounce woe to them at ease. § 16. Lead convinced sinners to Christ. § 17. They reason with the moralist. § 18. Rebuke and expose hypocrites. § 19. Encourage the weak, and stimulate the slothful. § 20. Deal tenderly, yet faithfully, with several sorts of distempered christians § 21. Alarm the declining. § 22. Awfully warn the falling. § 23. Comfort the persecuted and afflicted. § 24. We have particular lessons for strong christians. § 25. And a suitable portion for those who groan under corruption. § 26. The humble and penitent are comforted. § 27. Those who want direction are counselled. § 28. The deceiver and the deceived are distinctly treated. § 29. And those under desertion, though the instances in primitive times are few, have proper hints given them. § 30. The Puritan writers recommended. § 31. The necessity of applying to particular cases further urged and illustrated. § 32. (II.) *How* this valuable skill may be ATTAINED. 1. Study your *own hearts*, and preach over the ruder sketches of your sermons *to yourselves*. § 33. 2. *Converse* freely with serious people. § 34. To this the politer part may be backward; but, § 35. The difficulty may be in a measure obviated. § 36. 3. Have an eye upon *serious youth*. § 37. 4. Cultivate spiritual intimacy with *more advanced christians*. § 38. 5. *Distribute*, in your thoughts, your people *into classes*. § 39. 6. Study the most *popular* and *experimental authors* with this view. § 40. Conclusion.

§ 1. RIGHTLY to divide the word of truth is the necessary care of a minister, if he would be "approved "of God, and be a workman that needeth not to be "ashamed."* And it is a skill worth studying for, and labouring to attain: our success, and the good of souls, depend upon it more than is commonly imagined.

No doubt you may have heard many honest people express their dissatisfaction with some preachers, in such terms as these:—'They go on constantly in a *general way*, that does not come close to the heart, reaches not my case and experience, and I am not edified by them.' Their complaint is not altogether without meaning or reason, as I hope you will be convinced by and by.

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* 2 Tim. ii. 15.

§ 2. (I.) To keep a little in view that passage of scripture I have mentioned, DIVIDING THE WORD may mean these four things:—1. Going through the *variety* of gospel subjects: declaring the whole counsel of God, the doctrines of grace, threatenings, promises, and the duties of morality; and giving each its due proportion.

§ 3. Some, finding their thoughts flow most readily and affectionately on the *doctrines of grace*, and that by these they best command the affections of the hearers, are *altogether upon them;* and neglect to teach the people to observe what Christ has commanded them. I bear many of them witness they have a zeal for God, but I wish it were more according to knowledge. They do not sufficiently consider, that holiness is the very *design* of christianity; and our preaching on other heads is in order the better to enforce duty, and render men like to Christ.

I am afraid, from what I have observed, that this strain of preaching will increase the number of those hearers, whom our Saviour describes by the "stony ground," in the parable of the sower; namely, such who though full of notions and transient affections, and forward in profession, yet have an unsubdued will, no root in themselves, and bring forth no fruit to God. This strain, I fear, though it may seem to bring many *toward* Christ, will bring but few *safely to* him. Many of their hearers, with Christ much in their mouths, will prove but hypocrites settled on their lees, and slaves to lusts. Nor is this strain more happy for the uniform growth of the sincere christian. They that sit under it are too frequently low, imperfect and partial in practical godliness; distempered with conceit and preposterous zeal for words and phrases, and things of little or no consequence; perplexed and perplexing others with a thousand groundless scruples; children in understanding, and it were happy were they so in malice too; but

las! their narrowness of mind infects the heart with
ncharitable affections.

§ 4. Others having not arrived at the relish of the
octrines of grace themselves, suppress them in their
reaching and are *altogether on morality;* enforcing it
ith no motives of the gospel, except some of those ad-
ressed to *fear*. These, if they are masters of much fire,
ay be convincing to some; but it fares with most of
eir converts as with the man in the parable, out of
hom the unclean spirit went for a while, who finding
is house empty, returned with seven more; and the
tter end of such is worse than the beginning. Or else,
e awakened hearer either takes up with a proud de-
endence upon a mistaken, external, and pharisaical
ghteousness: or, not being by his teacher led to Christ,
e proceeds not, settles not; but abiding long under
e doubtful concern, is wearied with it, weary of it,
nd comes to nothing; which seems to be the thought in
Iosea;* "Ephraim is an unwise son; he should not
tay long in the place of the breaking forth of children."
)r lastly, if any are truly converted under such minis-
y, it is very usual that they are forced to desert it,
find richer and sweeter pasture for their souls.

Some of their hearers may possibly prefer this strain
preaching; but it does not thence follow that they are
e better for it. To illustrate this remark, I will recite
aragraph out of "Remarkable passages in the life of
rivate gentleman."——'Spiritual searching discour-
I did not so much savour as mere moral doctrines:
gh too immoral myself. The hopes I had con-
ed of the strength of my good resolutions rendered
grateful. SENECA's *Morals* I read with great plea-
.——Mr. BAXTER's *Saint's Rest* frighted me; so
reading a few passages, I threw it by.'—Thus with
t he tells us what little profit he had in that way,
s fondness for which he was ashamed, when he
to be of Paul's mind, to count all dross and dung,
e might win Christ.

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* Hos. xiii. 13.

§ 5. 2. The putting of a thought in several *distinct views* and lights, for different purposes and designs. The sacred writers are herein our pattern, and that not by chance, but for wise reasons. One view is designed to raise one affection; another view, to excite another of a different sort. And, finally, one of the views is designed as an antidote against the poison which the corruption of men's hearts might draw out of the other.

§ 6. For instance, the terms and way of our *justification* and *salvation* are frequently stated thus: "That we must be found in Christ, having on the righteousness which is of God by faith,"* and "we must be made the righteousness of God in him.'† And this view is exquisitely adapted to humble us, to draw forth love and gratitude, and encourage our hopes and dependance.

But lest this phraseology, if used alone, should beget security, at other times we are told, that "by *works* a man is justified, and not by *faith only;* and that faith without works is dead;"‡ and that the inquiry at the last day shall be, Who has "fed the hungry, clothed the naked?"|| &c.

§ 7. And most commonly these two views are *united* in the same paragraph; that one may prevent the ill consequences man's perverseness would draw from the other. As physicians, finding some dangerous effect likely to follow from a drug of sovereign virtue, mix some other with it, to prevent the fatal consequences.

So we are said to be "*elect*, according to the foreknowledge of God, *through sanctification* of the Spirit unto *obedience*, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus."§ Again we are told, that "*by grace* we are saved *through faith*, the gift of God, not of works; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *unto good works*."¶

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* Phil. iii. 9.

† 2 Cor. v. 21.

‡ Jam. ii. 24, 26.

|| Matt. xxv.

§ 1 Pet. i. 2.

¶ Eph. ii. 8—10.

§ 8. I may give another instance, in the different ways the scripture speaks of *power* and *duty*. Sometimes we are told, that "we *cannot* come to Christ except the Father draw us."* That "without Christ we can do *nothing*."† That "if we live, it is not we, but Christ that liveth in us."‡ Now these views tend to hide pride from man, to create a diffidence of ourselves, and to centre our hopes and dependance on Christ. But lest the slothful and wicked servant should make his impotence his excuse, we are called upon to "turn and make us new hearts," exhorted to "ask and we shall receive," and are assured "God will give the Spirit to them that ask him."|| And how happily are these two views united in this passage, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do."§

§ 9. Now, less skilful dividers of the word deal *entirely* in one of these views, and neglect the other; and while they are labouring to excite one good affection, they raise another of a bad tendency together with it. To this in part it is owing that there are so many low or distempered christians. Nor is this partiality more happy in affecting the real conversion of sinners, who generally, under such management, are either left asleep, and settled in a fond conceit of their own righteousness, or else stumble at the rock of offence, (in a different manner indeed from what the Jews did) thinking to find by Christ a way to heaven, without holiness or moral honesty.

§ 10. 3. Distinctly explaining and enforcing *particular duties;* and opposing *particular sins*. It is true, the whole scheme of gospel duty is deducible from the general heads of faith and love; but, alas! most men's minds are slow, confused, and erroneous in long deductions; and it is our business to lead them on in every step, and to shew what particular duties to God, our

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* John vi. 44.

† xv. 5.

‡ Gal. ii. 20.

|| Luke xi. 9, 13.

§ Phil. ii. 12, 13.

neighbour, and ourselves, will flow from these principles, and are necessary to make the man of God perfect. We must particularly teach them to "add to their faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity," if we would not leave them blind, and unfruitful.* And we should, in a particular manner, speak of "the fruits of the Spirit, as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance;" and at proper seasons explain and enforce each of them.† We should apply the lamp of the word to detect and disgrace all the particular "works of darkness," and to make manifest "the fruits of the flesh; such as adultery, lasciviousness, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like."‡

§ 11. If I should read to a sick person a learned lecture on the benefit of health, and exhort him to take care to recover it, but never inquire into the nature of his disease, or prescribe proper methods and medicines for the cure, he would hardly acquiesce in me for his physician, or resign to me the care of his bodily health. Nor is it a more likely way to the soul's health, to rest in mere *general* exhortations to holiness, without distinctly handling the several branches thereof, and the opposite sins.

§ 12. 4. *Particularly applying* to the *several cases*, tempers, and experiences of the hearers. Besides many thoughts suited in general to all cases, there might properly arise in the application of most subjects, thoughts distinctly proper to the converted and unconverted; to notional hypocrites, and mere moralists, to mourners, to backsliders, and lazy christians; and at several times to a much greater variety of characters and persons. Now such particular addresses, when the case is drawn in a lively manner, and in the natural language of the sort of men intended, and judiciously and artfully treated, are the closest, most weighty, and most useful parts of the application.

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* 2 Pet. i. 7. † Gal. v. 22, 23. ‡ Gal. v. 19, 21.

§ 13. That this is the true way of addressing an auditory, viz. to divide them into several classes, and distinctly speak to each, will be plain, if we look through the apostolic writings, and, I might add, the prophetic also, with this view; and we shall find that both prophets and apostles frequently take care to *distinguish* the holy and the vile, the converted and the unconverted. As for instance, as to their *knowledge* and *apprehension* of things:—"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, they are foolishness to him, he cannot know them: but the spiritual judge all things."* And also as to their *obedience* to the law; "The carnal mind is enmity against God, is not subject to God's law, nor can be subject, or please God."†

§ 14. They particularly reprove *scoffers*, and confute *gainsayers:* "Behold *ye despisers*, and wonder, and perish." For instance, those who denied or cavilled at the resurrection; "*Thou fool*, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die, &c."‡ And also those that were for a faith without works; "Wilt thou know, *vain man*, that faith without works is dead, &c."||

§ 15. They address carnal *stupid sinners* in an awful way; denounce "woe to them that are at ease;" as Paul, when he made Felix tremble;§ or as Stephen, "Ye *stiff-necked* and uncircumcised," &c.¶

§ 16. They laid *convinced sinners* to Christ; to those that are inquiring they say, "If ye will inquire, inquire ye, return, come; turn to the strong hold; if the Lord hath torn, he will heal." "Repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins," &c.** "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," &c.††

§ 17. They reason with the *moralist*, and those that "trust in themselves that they are righteous;" shewing their righteousness is "as filthy rags." "The law saith, there is none righteous, but all the world are guilty before God; therefore by the deeds of the law

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* 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.

† Rom. viii. 7, 8.

‡ 1 Cor. 15.

|| James ii.

§ Acts xxiv 25.

¶ Acts vii. 51—54.

** Acts ii. 38.

†† Acts xvi. 31.

shall no flesh be justified; but the righteousness of God is manifested, that God might freely justify them that believe on Jesus, therefore man is justified by faith; boasting is excluded by the law of faith."* And ye received the *Spirit* by the hearing of *faith*; the *gospel* was *before* preached to Abraham; they that are of the works of the *law* are under the *curse*. But the *law* could not disannul the covenant confirmed before, but was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by *faith;* they then that are Christ's are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."†

§ 18. They sharply rebuke and expose *pretending hypocrites*, shewing them their abominations, detecting and confounding the wretches that "delight to know God's ways, and hear his word, but will not do it." As Peter; "Thou hast no part in this matter; thy heart is not right in the sight of God;"‡ and James; "Shew me thy faith without thy works;—the devils believe and tremble."||

§ 19. They rouse and encourage christians, who have but *little strength*, and persuade them to make farther advances in religion; that he that is "feeble may be as David." "Ye are dull of hearing for the time ye ought to have been teachers; strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age; therefore, leaving the first principles, let us go on to perfection."§

§ 20. They deal with the several sorts of *distempered christians* tenderly, and yet plainly, and faithfully; as particularly, with those who idolize one minister, and despise others; telling them, it is not by might and power of man, but by God's Spirit, that the gospel is successful. "While one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? Who is Paul or Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed? It is God that giveth the increase; Paul, Apollos, Cephas, all are yours."¶——They endeavour to soften those of too rigid a temper, exhorting them not to speak to the grief of those whom God hath smitten: as, "Ye ought rather to forgive and comfort him; I beseech you to confirm your love towards him."* "If a man be overtaken in a fault, restore him in the spirit of meekness, considering lest thou also be tempted."†——They talk roundly to those who are apt to make God the author of sin; who say, "We unavoidably pine away in our iniquities, and how can we then be saved?" As in James, "Let no man say I am tempted of God; for God tempteth not any man."‡

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* Rom. iii.
† Gal. iii.
‡ Acts viii. 21.
|| James ii.
§ Heb. v. 6.
¶ 1 Cor. *iii.*

§ 21. *Declining christians* are quickened, awakened, and put in mind of the love of their espousals: "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die."||

§ 22. They awfully warn those who are in danger of sinning, and *falling back* to perdition; telling them, "the righteousness they have done will be remembered no more:" and "God's soul will have no pleasure in them." "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, &c. if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, seeing they crucify the Son of God afresh."§

§ 23. They encourage the *persecuted* and *afflicted*; telling them, "When they pass through the fire and water, God will be with them," and that "when they are tried they shall come forth as gold, and be the Lord's in that day when he maketh up his jewels." "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed."¶ We are compassed with a cloud of witnesses; Jesus endured the cross, and is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and that for our profit; chastening yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness."** And more particularly those that lament relations dead in Christ, are told they shall go to be happy with them, though the dead shall not return: "Sorrow not as do others that have no hope; for those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."*

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* 2 Cor. ii. 7.
† Gal. vi. 1.
‡ Jam. i. 13.
|| Rev iii. 2.
§ Heb. vi. 4.
¶ Rom. viii. 18.
** Heb. xii.

§ 24. There are also particular lessons for *strong christians*, viz. to be tender to the weak, and to be public-spirited, that as "Ephraim should not envy Judah, so neither should Judah vex Ephraim:" "Him that is weak in the faith receive:—Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not;—Let none put a stumbling-block in his brother's way;—Let not your good be ill spoken of;—Hast thou faith? have it to thyself;—Bear the infirmities of the weak;—Let every one please his neighbour for his good to edification."† "Knowledge puffeth up: but charity edifieth;—Let not your liberty be a stumbling-block to the weak,—nor through thy knowledge let thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died;—If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh whilst the world stands."‡ Again, they are told, that "a mark is set upon the men" that deplore the sins of the times; and "a book of remembrance is written" for those who distinguish themselves by their piety in times of abounding wickedness. "Thou hast a few names who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy."||

§ 25. You find also a suitable portion for those who are *groaning under corruption;* who complain they were "shapen in iniquity," and their actual "errors are past understanding;" although "I am carnal, sold under sin, and what I would I do not, and what I hate that do I; in my flesh dwells no good, and to perform good I find not, yea, with the flesh I serve the law of sin, (Oh wretched man that I am!") yet, "I consent to God's law, and delight in it after the inner-man; it is not then I that do this evil, but sin that dwelleth in me. I thank God through Jesus Christ; with my mind I serve God's law, and God will deliver me from the body of this death."§ And they are told how God hath

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* 1 Thes. iv. 13, 14.
† Rom. xvi.
‡ 1 Cor. viii.
|| Rev. iii. 4.
§ Rom. vii.

"laid on Christ our iniquities;" and he will be "the Lord our righteousness and strength." "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."*

§ 26. The *humble* and *penitent*, who are of a contrite spirit, and tremble at God's word, are comforted: "Ye were sorry indeed, it was but for a season;—It was after a godly manner;—I rejoice in it;—Such sorrow worketh repentance not to be repented of;—It wrought in you carefulness, fear, desire, zeal and revenge; you have approved yourselves clear in this matter."†

§ 27. They who *want direction*, and cry out, "Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!" are sent to God for counsel. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, and it shall be given him."‡

§ 28. The *deceiver* and the *deceived* (viz. those of evil minds, who seduce others, and those that are misled in the simplicity of their hearts) are to be distinctly and differently treated; "On some have compassion, and others save with fear."||

§ 29. As for those of the house of Israel in *desertion*, who mourn after the Lord, who walk in darkness and see no light, and say, "the Lord hath forsaken me," there were, I believe few, if any, in those days of the plentiful effusion of the Spirit, when the gospel-church was in its infancy, and "a nation was to be born in a day;" but few, I say, who had doubts about their sincerity; they had persecutions, distress, and exercises of another sort; and those were sufficient. I am apt to think such cases were also rare in the beginning of the reformation from popery; which seems to be the occasion of some of the first reformers confounding faith with assurance. However, there are laid up, in the New Testament, some proper hints of counsel, for such as should in after times labour under the hidings of God's face; as, "To examine themselves;—For this to beseech the Lord;—To clear themselves of sin;—Not to faint in well-doing;" and the like.

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* 1 John ii. 1. † 2 Cor. vii.
‡ James i. 5. || Jude 22.

§ 30. Brethren, from your acquaintance with the *scriptures*, you will easily perceive that I could run this specimen much farther through the sacred writings. And if you peruse the writings of the most powerful and successful preachers; particular the *puritan divines*, * you will see that they herein imitated the great leaders of the christian profession; and were large in their *particular application* to several sorts of persons; suiting their discourses to all the variety of the hearts of men, and sorts and frames of christians, according to the precepts of christianity, and I may add, of *true oratory*. In this way they found their own hearts warmed, and thus they reached the hearts of their hearers; whilst many were imagining the minister had been told of their case, and made the sermon for *them;* and so was verified that passage,—"The word of God is quick and powerful,—a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts.' †

§ 31. Now what success can we reasonably expect, if we do not take into close consideration the cases of our several spiritual patients? If a man, professing physic, should administer or prescribe one constant medicine for fevers, and another for consumptions, and so for other distempers, without considering the age, constitution, strength, and way of living of his patient; and not vary his method and medicines as those vary, we should hardly call this the regular practice of physic. Nor can I think this general and undistinguishing way will be more safe, or likely to answer its end, in divinity than in medicine.

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* Of these a copious list may be seen in the Appendix. Properly speaking those are termed *Puritans* who were professed favourers of a further degree of reformation and purity in the church than were publicly countenanced, *before* the act of Uniformity, in the reign of *Charles* the Second, 1662; after this period the term *Nonconformist* became common; to which succeeds the appellation, *Dissenter*. Yet it is observable that the *Puritans*, generally speaking, only wanted the church reformed; the *Nonconformists*, liberty from unreasonable *impositions*; and most modern *Dissenters* object to *all civil establishments* of religion.

† Heb. iv. 12.

§ 32. (II.) Now I rest persuaded, brethren, the thing is so evident you cannot but allow it is best to suit ourselves to all the variety of tempers and experience of the hearers, if it can be done; and I hope some thoughts may be successfully offered upon the way HOW this skill may be ATTAINED.

1. Above all, then, carefully *study* your *own hearts*, and preach over the ruder sketches of your *sermons to yourselves* first;* by which means the correspondent workings of your own hearts and affections may furnish you with proper thoughts wherewith to apply closely to all, whose temper, experience and case are like your own: for what is supplied to your imperfect notes, out of the applicatory meditations of your own minds on the subject, will very probably, according to the usual way of the Spirit, happily and powerfully reach those of the same make in like circumstances.

§ 33. 2. But, alas! one man's experience falls far short of all the variety of men's hearts, and of the Spirit's work; nay, those whose heads are turned for close and regular thought, and whose time has been spent in study and letters, as they go on more rationally and evenly in religion, have less variety of experience than many of a different mould and way of thinking. Here it will be needful then to look out of ourselves, and take a large view, in order to be acquainted with cases and tempers different from our own; and with such methods of the Spirit's work, as we ourselves have never experienced, but many others have. Now the best and original way of getting this acquaintance with men, and with God's workings in them (and I may add, of Satan's workings also) is by *conversing freely* with the *serious people* of our flock.

§ 34. I know your thoughts will prevent me with an objection; you will say, This is almost impracticable, especially amongst persons of politeness and figure; these, alas! too rarely will use any such freedom with us, in laying open their hearts, and communicating their experience to us, as may give us the needful information. If we ever do arrive at any acquaintance with the experience of christians, little thanks are due to such as these; they expect we should preach suitably to them, and that with as much reason as Nebuchadnezzar demanded of the wise men to interpret a dream they knew not. The middle and lower sort of people, indeed, are more unreserved to grave ministers of age and standing, but will hardly use the same freedom with young men.

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* The method recommended here by the Tutor, was, we are informed by Mr. *Orton*, exemplified by the pupil, Dr. *Doddridge*, with great advantage. I would here insert the passage, but that I take it for granted the *Christian Preacher* will have in his library the valuable publication referred to; *Orton's* Memoirs of the Life, Character and Writings of Dr. *Doddridge*, 2nd edit. p. 26, &c.

§ 35. To help you over this difficulty, I would observe, that, as for the polite, and men of some thought and reading, your own experience, with the allowances and corrections a moderate skill in human nature will enable you to make, may lead you into happy conjectures at their way of thinking. Besides, in the time of their visitation, under some sore affliction, you will find them more communicative; and an hour's free discourse, with such as can give a rational and intelligible account of themselves, in a season when they are disposed to do it, is as valuable and useful, as it is rare and difficult to enter into.

§ 36. 3. Again, have an eye upon the *serious youth*, whom nature and providence has designed to place in a superior class; and especially at a time when the impressions of religion are new to them. You will find them more open than elder persons, if you court their intimacy, and relieve their bashfulness; and if you can see into the heart of a youth, then, with the proper allowances for alterations that age and business will make, you may pretty well guess at their turn of mind in more advanced years.

§ 37. 4. With the generality of serious and *more advanced Christians*, there needs not so much nicety to get into such a spiritual intimacy with them as we desire; the laying aside of nicety and ceremony, and getting into such a grave good-natured way as our character requires; is more than half-way to our purpose. Where this is insufficient to encourage the people to freedom, lead them into it by communicating first, either what yourselves have experienced, under the name of a third person (if modesty or prudence require it) or else what you have learned from others, without betraying the confidence they have put in you. By these methods we shall seldom fail of drawing serious people on to such a freedom, as will be of use to them and ourselves: If we heartily go about it, we are pretty sure to succeed.

§ 38. 5. I may farther hint at a compendious way for gaining much knowledge of men's hearts in a little time, viz. If you have any tolerable skill in the different tempers and complexions of mankind, *distribute*, in your thoughts, your people *into classes*, according to their natural genius and temper, and select one of each class, with whom to be more particularly acquainted; for amongst those whom nature has formed alike, you will find, upon further inquiry, a striking uniformity in the Spirit's work and way of proceeding with them.

§ 39. 6. I might recommend a way of knowing these things at second hand, viz. from the *most popular* and *experimental authors*. But this way is far inferior to the other; we shall but faintly paint any phænomenon of the heart, by copying another picture; it is infinitely preferable to do it from the life. Yet would I earnestly recommend the perusal of such authors as deal much in an experimental strain, and have been very successful in it; but with a different design, viz. That we may learn from them, how to describe, in a discreet and lively manner, such cases as we ourselves have observed; and how to address properly to those cases, with the like thoughts and expressions, as have, in the course of their preaching happily answered the end.

§ 40. After all, rightly to divide the word of truth, with true wisdom, is a matter of no small difficulty; but if we carefully and diligently go about it—with a zeal for our Master's interest, and sensible of our own insufficiency, asking wisdom of God—we know he giveth liberally, and will surely make us wise to win souls, to the honour of his name, and our own rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. To whom with the Father and Holy Spirit, that one God whom we adore, be paid the highest honours and praises to eternal ages. Amen.

THE

CHRISTIAN PREACHER, &c.

DISCOURSE IV.

OF THE MOST USEFUL WAY OF PREACHING.

§ 1. Introduction. The subject proposed. The supposed character of an useful preacher. § 2. Useful preaching requires that a minister lay down, very frequently, the distinguishing *marks* of the converted and unconverted, with plainness, and especially with justness. § 3. Clearly distinguish betwixt mere *morality* and true *religion*. § 4. Instruct in, and exhort to the duty of *self-examination*. § 5. Shew the difference between what is *legal*, and what *evangelical*, in principle and practice. § 6. Shew men their native *weakness*, with the *grace* and strength of Christ. § 7. These last particulars further enforced. § 8. The necessity, nature and progress of *conversion*. § 9. A minister should take pains with his own *heart* and *sermons*, in order to bring sinners to Christ. § 10. Inculcate the necessity of *prayer*. § 11. Explain the gradual *renewing* of the mind. § 12. Represent the whole of christian faith and duty as *amiable* and attractive. § 13. Avoid prolixity in explaining the text, and hasten to the *application*. § 14. Use the most *winning* argumeuts to bring souls to Christ. § 15. Display the excellency of Christ's *person* and *grace*. § 16 Insist on the *love* of Christ. § 17. And see that you love Christ fervently *yourself*. § 18. Express it not only in words, but also by correspondent *actions*. § 19. Preach upon the duties of self-denial and weanedness from the world. § 20. Recommend reading not only of the scriptures, but also of other *good books*. § 21. And practise the same for *personal* edification. § 22. Recommend converse with growing, praying christians. § 26. Conclusion. A prayer.

§ 1. IN answer to the question which you have proposed to me, viz. How a faithful minister, who earnestly desires to save and to edify the souls of his hearers, to gain sinners unto Christ, and to inflame their hearts with a growing love to their Saviour, may best adapt his preaching to these excellent purposes? I can only at present suggest a few things briefly; whereas, if I had more leisure, I should choose to write more copiously on so weighty a subject.

I must take it for granted that a minister, who sincerely desires and who is likely to do good by his preaching, is such a one, both in heart and life, as St. Paul describes, " Who holds fast the form of sound words (or the pure apostolic doctrine) which he has heard, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus; and who keeps that good thing which has been committed to him by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in him.*

§ 2. It will not a little subserve the good ends proposed in the question, for a minister, very frequently, to lay down in his sermons the *distinguishing marks* and *characters* both of the *converted*, and of the *unconverted*, and that with all possible *plainness*, that so every one of his hearers may be able to judge of his own estate, and may know to which of these two classes he belongs. But then great care must be taken that those distinguishing characters are *justly* drawn: for it may easily happen, through a preacher's unskilfulness in this affair, that the unconverted, on the one hand, may be deceived into a good opinion of their present state, and may grow thereupon more secure and careless; and that some converted persons, on the other hand, may be unreasonably disquieted, and filled with groundless and fruitless fears. However, a prudent minister, who has experienced a work of grace upon his own heart, will have no great difficulty so to describe it to others, as sufficiently to guard against the mistakes on both sides; and to lead both the one and the other, by the unerring light of scripture, into the knowledge of the true state of their own souls.

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* 2 Tim. i. 13, 14.

§ 3. For this purpose also let a minister carefully and *clearly distinguish*, in his preaching, betwixt *mere morality* and *true religion;* betwixt the morally honest man and the sound believer, who, from a deep conviction of the depravity of his nature and the errors of his life, has learned to hate sin from his heart, and lives by the faith of the Son of God. For it is hardly credible what multitudes of persons there are, even in christian countries, where the gospel is publicly and faithfully preached, who, though they are wise enough in other matters, yet in this they are grossly ignorant, and thereby miserably deceive their own souls.

§ 4. And, because this kind of self-deceit is so very common, it is highly necessary for a minister to *instruct* his hearers, with all possible *plainness* in the *duty of self-examination;* and very often to *exhort* them to it: as more especially to inquire, if ever they were awakened from their natural sleep of sin? If they have escaped out of the snare of the Devil? If ever they have had a lively and affecting sense of the corruption of their own hearts, and of the misery of their natural state? And, in short, whether they have good and solid reasons to conclude that they are regenerate persons? Whether they can find in themselves the genuine marks of a true conversion to God, and a living faith in Christ? &c. Or whether, on the other hand, they do not conclude that they are true christians, and in a state of salvation, merely from their being moral, honest men, and their not living in any gross and scandalous sin? And, perhaps too, from their saying prayers, hearing sermons, and frequenting the places of public worship, and from their practising such like outward duties of religion? Or, again, whether they do not flatter themselves that their eternal state is safe, merely because their lives are not altogether so bad as the lives of some others?

§ 5. It would also be of very considerable use for a minister often to explain, and to shew the difference betwixt a *legal* and an *evangelical* frame and principle of religion; or betwixt that slavish fear, by which alone it is that some persons, even of a serious turn of mind, are forced and dragged, as it were, to their duty,—and that evangelical newness of spirit, that filial love to God; and delight in his service, which usually grows and flourishes in the soul where it is once planted, and which produces a free, unconstrained, and acceptable religion. This would be an excellent means, not only of awakening sinners out of their carnal security; but of turning them fully to God, to a holy walk, and to a pleasurable converse with him, even such as becomes his children.

§ 6. And for this end it is of very great moment, that a minister not only instruct his hearers what they must do, and how they ought to act, but that he also labour fully to apprize and to convince them by the evidence of scripture, of their own *native weakness* and impotence for all that is *spiritually good;* and that he further shew them, by the same word of truth, from whence they must look for, and from whom they may hope to receive all *grace and strength*, not only to renew their souls in their first conversion, but also afterwards to enable them to perform every duty, as well of outward as of inward religion. They must be told that they can do nothing without Christ, according as he has assured us; "Without me ye can do nothing."* And, again, that by the help of his grace they may do all things; according as St. Paul writes, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.'† Thus should gospel ministers constantly make it the aim and drift of their preaching, to lead their hearers to Christ and to his grace; to him by whose stripes we are healed, and whose blood takes away all the sins of all that truly repent and believe in the Lord Jesus; and to him, "by whose divine power all things are given to us that pertain both to life and godliness."*

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* John xv. 5.

† Phil. iv. 13.

§ 7. Thus the holy *apostles preached;* these were the topics which they insisted much upon; and if their *example* is not followed in this matter, it will be no wonder if our modern preaching comes vastly short of the *success* of theirs. And by this means some of our hearers will be in danger of sinking into a mere legal frame and spirit of bondage, while they are pressed to duty and working, but not encouraged by the grace of Christ, nor directed where to look for strength to perform it; and others of them will take up with a false peace, a carnal security, for want of being directed to Christ, who is the only foundation of the sinner's reasonable hope and solid comfort. But, on the other hand, when both these points are well explained, and are duly insisted on, no other means are so powerful to awaken secure sinners, to bring them to Christ, and to settle their souls in solid peace and comfort. Hereby, under the influence of the Spirit of Christ, they find themselves transported, as it were, into a new life; and now they go on with vigour and pleasure in the practice of universal piety.

§ 8. It would further be useful, and it is highly necessary that ministers should not only preach up the *necessity of conversion*, and instruct their hearers to depend on the grace of Christ for it, but also that they should, very frequently, in their sermons, explain the *nature* and the whole *progress* of conversion; sometimes more largely and distinctly, and at other times more briefly, endeavouring thereby to lead their hearers into a true knowledge of the state of their souls; and shewing them how they must repent of their sins, what they must do to be saved from their natural misery and ruin; and, in short, how they may obtain the full salvation of the gospel, so that every one may be able to give an answer to that most important question, What must I do that I may be a child of God, and inherit eternal life? For, let a minister entertain his hearers with the sublimest doctrines of christianity, let him also declaim against sin, and exhort them to their various duties, in the most earnest and pathetic manner, and let all be adorned with the finest beauties of wit and eloquence; yet, after all, if his sermons are not so contrived and framed as, at the same time, to inform the ignorant how they may obtain an interest in the gospel-salvation for themselves, and what means and methods God has appointed for that purpose; what will it profit them? No more than a parcel of shreds of cloth, of various dyes, though they were of the finest thread and liveliest colours, would serve the purpose of a man who wants a handsome garment. Whereas, a sermon that informs the ignorant sinner, not only of the necessity of conversion, but also how that happy change may certainly be effected in his own soul, may not unfitly be compared, in respect to its usefulness, to a complete garment, made all of a piece, well fitted to the shape of him that wants it, and which he may therefore put on and wear with honour and with pleasure.

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* 2 Pet. i. 3.

§ 9. But now, in order to all this, a minister must take pains with his *own heart;* as well as in *composing his sermons;* he must have a true zeal for CHRIST, and aim at nothing so much as to *bring sinners to him.* This should be, in some measure, the design and drift of *every sermon* that he preaches, that so, if a person should happen to hear him but once in all his life, he might, even by means of that one sermon, get some notion of the one thing needful, and be just entered, at least, into the way of salvation. For this should every minister study and strive, and for this should he continually pray that God would fill his heart with pious zeal and holy wisdom, that he may divide the word of truth aright, and minister grace unto his hearers.

§ 10. It might probably make some good impressions on the minds of the people, were a minister pretty often to *inculcate*, with great plainness and seriousness, the *necessity of prayer;* and more particularly, what need they have to pray very earnestly to the God of grace, that he would set home his word upon their hearts, that he would bring the good seed to perfection, in their full and blessed conformity to himself. And further; so great is the ignorance of many persons concerning the duty of prayer, that they seem to have no other notion of it than merely of reading some forms out of a prayer book. This makes it to be as necessary, as it would probably be a useful thing, for a minister to lead them, as it were, by the hand, into this path of their duty; that is, to explain it to them in a most easy and familiar manner, to shew them that it requires no great art and skill to pray acceptably unto God; for they are to speak to him as children to a loving father; they are to spread before him their sorrows and complaints; they are to tell him of the state and condition of their souls, just as they find and feel it; and they need not be at all solicitous about exactness of expression and elegant phrases in their secret prayers, for God regards the sense of the heart, rather than the language of the lips. The scriptures themselves furnish us with several examples of such artless and yet acceptable prayers. Let a minister then diligently instruct his hearers how they are, in the first place, to get their hearts disposed for prayer; and it may be of use also to assist and furnish the more ignorant with appropriate expressions; but, at the same time, let him inform them, that they need not tie themselves to use those very words, nor any form whatever; but that they should learn to pour out their hearts unto God, in those words by which they can best express the real sentiments and affections of their own souls, according to the Psalmist, "Ye people pour out your hearts before him."*

§ 11. It is further extremely necessary that ministers should very often take occasion to *explain*, in their sermons, that *renewing* or change *of the mind*, which is so essential to all true religion, and which yet, alas!

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* Ps. lxii. 8.

but very few persons seem to understand, or indeed to have almost any notion of. Nor is it enough to explain that first and mighty change, which is at once made in a sinner at his conversion, when he comes to love that good which before he hated, and to hate that evil which he before loved, when, from being an unbeliever, he becomes a believer; or when his false and dead faith is changed into a true and saving one. But that further progressive change should also be much recommended, in which the christian must be improving to the very end of his life, which St. Paul refers to, 2 Cor. iii. 18. "But now" (the vail which was upon the heart being taken away, and the Spirit of the Lord having taken up his dwelling in it, ver. 16, 17.) "we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.' Hereby the mind is more and more renewed, the christian grows up in the spirit and temper of Christ, and his lovely image is daily drawn upon the soul in fairer lines.

§ 12. It is of considerable moment also, that the whole *faith and duty* of a christian be *represented* in its most *amiable* and *attractive* light; that so sinners may be won to religion, upon a full conviction, that, if they would do well for themselves, and obtain true peace and comfort, the shortest, the surest, and indeed the only way, is to turn in good earnest from sin to God and holiness; and that religion is by no means a grievous and melancholy thing, of which any man need be afraid, but full of pleasure and greatly desirable, even for its own sake; and though it call us, indeed, to a present combat, and requires us to fight and strive against sin; yet this is but in order to peace, and to certain victory, which will much more than recompense the toils of the war.

§ 13. It were much to be wished that ministers would not take up more of their sermons than necessary in explaining their text; but rather, after as short an explication of it as is sufficient to lead their hearers into the true sense and meaning, (which must by no means be neglected) *hasten to the application*; and in that let a minister address himself to his hearers with a becoming seriousness and earnestness; let him apply his subject both to saints and sinners, to the converted and to the unconverted, in order to awaken the secure and careless, and to build up true believers in their faith and holiness. Experience would soon shew that this is by far a more profitable way, than to spend almost the whole discourse, as some do, in explaining their text and subject, and then close with a short application, because the time is gone.

§ 14. It were also greatly to be wished, that those under-shepherds of the flock of Christ would make it more designedly and zealously the purpose of their preaching, to bring sinners to him, who is the great Shepherd of the sheep; that they would strive, by the *most winning arguments* they can possibly use, and especially by such as the grace of the gospel will naturally suggest, to persuade and even compel them to come to him. As the hen when she lights on a few crumbs, or grains of corn; how earnestly does she invite her brood to come and share the treasure with her! She will by no means be satisfied, nor leave off calling them till they come. Thus did our blessed Saviour; how graciously did he call and invite sinners to come to him in the days of his personal ministry upon earth! "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,*[*] &c. "If any thirst, let him come unto me and drink: He that believeth on me; as the scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."[†] And much to the same purpose we find him speaking in several other places. Thus also we hear the prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament, inviting sinners unto Christ, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,"[‡] &c. And thus St. Paul, in the New Testament, "We beseech you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.'[||] And thus doth the apostle John, very frequently in his divine writings. Remarkably to this purpose also are those words of our blessed Saviour, concerning Jerusalem, "How often would I have gathered thy children, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!"* Christ called sinners to come to himself, as their proper Lord and Master, as their only Redeemer and Saviour; "whereas we," saith St. Paul, "preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."† And therefore we endeavour to bring sinners not to ourselves, but to him. But now in order to this, and that a minister may be thus happily successful in his preaching, he must not only sincerely love his people, and have an affectionate concern for their salvation, but he must be an ardent lover of Christ too; he must wish and desire, and covet nothing so much as to bring all that hear him to Christ; to deliver every one of them, as it were, into his gracious arms, could he but persuade them to be so happy; that thus they may learn, even by the example of their minister, to love the Lord Jesus.

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[*] Matt. xi. 28.

[†] John vii. 37, 38.

[‡] Isa. lv. 1.

[||] 2 Cor. v. 11.

§ 15. For this purpose it is further requisite, that a minister should very often take occasion to display, in the most lively colours the *excellency* and glory of *Christ's person*, the kindness of his heart, and the exceeding riches of his *grace*, both as he is God and man, as he is now a glorious, triumphant Saviour, as well as when once he sustained and executed the same office in a humble and suffering state: And that he further inform his hearers, what excellent blessings are treasured up in Christ, to be bestowed on all his friends and people, that so they may be drawn to him by a principle of desire and love, that they may most willingly give him their hearts; and that so it may be the breathing of their souls, and the matter of their most earnest prayer to Christ, that he would be pleased to manifest his love to them; that he would "shed it abroad in their hearts by his Holy Spirit;‡ that he would more and more reveal to them the glory of his majesty; that he would impress and affect their minds with a lively sense of it, that so they may yet more and more love and honour him, their heavenly Spouse, by whom it is that they have, and that they further hope for access to and acceptance with the Father, and with whom they also hope to dwell for ever and ever.

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* Matt. xxiii. 37. † 2 Cor. iv. 5. ‡ Rom. v. 5.

§ 16. The *love of Christ* ought to be much more *insisted on* by preachers than what is commonly done; because when we apply to ourselves, in a right manner, his passion, death and atonement, his merits, and that purchase of salvation which he hath made for us; the knowledge of his love to us, and of our pardon and justification through faith and his blood, is the truest spring and most powerful attractive of our love to him. Now the more we love Christ, and that for this very reason, because he first loved us, the better will every other branch of our religion flourish, every other grace and every other duty will then flow from its proper fountain; and therefore the more a minister endeavours to instil this principle of sacred love into the hearts of his hearers, the more comfortable success will he probably see of his labours, in their spiritual improvement and growing obedience to the gospel.

§ 17. But especially, and in the first place, let every minister look to his own heart, and see to it that he *himself loves Christ fervently*, lest he should be as the sounding brass, and as the tinkling cymbal, of which the apostle speaks.* And, besides without a sincere love to Christ in his own soul, there will be little probability of his recommending him effectually to the love of others. It is not enough for him to preach a great many sermons upon the love of Christ, and to exhort his hearers to love him; for if his own heart is not warmed with this sacred love, his discourses on that subject will be cold and lifeless, and therefore unprofitable and fruitless. Nothing could be more pertinently answered, in a few words, to one that asked another, How he might learn to be a good and useful preacher? than this, *Si multum ames Christum;* you must learn to be a zealous lover of Christ.

§ 18. But then let it be further noted, that sincere love to Christ will always *express itself* not only in words, but by suitable or *correspondent actions.* So our Saviour has taught us, John xv. 14. Ye are my friends, said he, if ye do whatsoever I command you; i. e. This is the best and most substantial evidence of your sincere friendship, and that you truly love me.

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* 1 Cor. xiii. 1.

§ 19. I reckon also the duties of *self-denial* and *weanedness from the world* and its carnal pleasures, and, in short, from all the present things of sense and time, to be among those more important and necessary subjects which ministers should often preach upon, oftener indeed than most of them do. These are subjects which our Saviour Christ, when he was a preacher upon earth, very much insisted upon in his sermons; "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."* "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, &c. yea, and his own life also, (i. e. in comparison of me,) he cannot be my disciple."† And how needful are these subjects *now!* For, alas! how many persons are there, who can talk well about Christ and religion; nay, who carry a fair appearance of virtue and godliness, and who perform many outward duties with reputation and honour, and yet not having learned to deny themselves, their love of the world not being sufficiently mortified, they are easily overcome in a day of trial, and sacrifice their religion and their souls to worldly interest. Let self-denial then be earnestly recommended, and that, not merely as a moral virtue, or a philosophical attainment; I mean not upon such principles only as the heathen moralists used to insist upon; but let it be recommended and urged as a christian grace, as that which flows chiefly from love to Christ, even such a love as will make us ready to deny ourselves the pleasures, riches, and honours of this world, all manner of sensual gratifications, and our very lives themselves (ενεκεν αυτȣ,) *for his sake*, as Christ not only expects, but requires of us.‡

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* Matt. xvi 24—26. † Luke xiv. 26. ‡ Matt. xvi. 25.

§ 20. Though the *diligent reading* of the *scriptures* themselves, even the inspired writings of the prophets and apostles, and the very words of our Saviour Christ, should be chiefly recommended, as they are undoubtedly far preferable to any books of mere human composition; yet, besides these, a minister may very profitably recommend to his hearers some other *good books of religion*, both ancient and modern, to be read by them at home, in their own closets or families; such books, I mean, as are written in a truly evangelical strain, and with a spirit of lively devotion and piety, which would be no inconsiderable means, both of preserving and nourishing the fire of divine love in their hearts. I might mention, by way of instance, MARTIN STATIUS's *Lutherus Redivivus*, which is nothing else but an abridgment of *Luther's* works, in which the most considerable passages are collected into a narrow compass, and such passages, more especially, as have the most direct and powerful tendency to awaken, and to excite the minds of men to lively, practical religion. However, I mention this but as one instance, out of a great many very excellent and useful books with which the providence of God has now furnished his church, and which we ought to account as a precious treasure to it.

§ 21. And further, let not any minister think that the people *only* are to be profited in their souls by reading such good books, while all the use that he is concerned to make of them for himself, is only to form his stile by reading them, or to borrow thoughts from them, or, it may be, to *steal sermons* out of them, (which is shamefully the practice of too many preachers) but he should read them, chiefly and in the first place, with a view to his *own spiritual edification*. He should endeavour so to use and improve the gifts which God has bestowed on other men, as that his own soul may be the better for them, as well as the souls of the people to whom he preaches.

§ 22. Once more, let faithful ministers by no means forget to recommend to their hearers, that they would familiarly acquaint themselves and converse with serious, lively, and *growing christians*, and with such more especially as excel in the gift and spirit of *prayer;* for as a live coal kindles another that is cold and dead, so will the savoury discourse, the fervent prayers, and the holy conversation of warm and lively christians, be a probable means of kindling the same fire of divine love in the souls of dead sinners; or, at least, of nourishing and improving the sacred flame in the hearts of their more intimate christian friends. Ministers should therefore do all they can to promote such christian conversation, amongst the more serious part of their hearers: observing, however, the rules of necessary prudence; particularly that of the apostle, "Let all things be done decently and in order."* They should exhort them, as St. Paul does the Colossians, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord:" to which pious purpose, that large and rich treasure of sacred hymns, both ancient and modern, with which God has graciously blessed his church, is not a little conducive, for which therefore we are bound to render him immortal praises.

§ 23. Thus I have briefly answered your question, and given you my thoughts on the most *useful* way of preaching. May God, for Christ's sake, attend what I have written with his effectual blessing. To him I would now offer up the following prayer.

"O Lord God! give, I beseech thee, both now and at all times hereafter, to thy church, pastors and teachers after thine own heart, even such as shall bring the sheep of Christ into his fold, and who, through the influence of thy good Spirit, shall feed them with saving knowledge and understanding. Make every preacher of thy word to know and always to remember, that neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but thou art all in all, who alone canst give the increase. Let none of them vainly presume on their own skill and ability to do any good by their preaching, and obtain any good success; but let them all humbly wait upon thee, and by fervent daily prayer let them seek for and obtain the aids of thy grace, to enable them to dispense the word of life; and let thy blessing render their preaching happily successful to the souls of those that hear them. Amen.'

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* 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

THE

CHRISTIAN PREACHER, &c.

DISCOURSE V.

RULES FOR THE PREACHER'S CONDUCT.

§ 1. Introduction. The subject stated. § 2. (I.) Take heed to your PERSONAL RELIGION. § 3. As to its reality and evidence, liveliness and power, growth and increase. § 4. Which will have many happy effects. § 5. (II.) Take heed to your PRIVATE STUDIES. General studies. § 6. Particular studies. § 7. Particular rules in preparatory studies. 1. In *choosing* a text. § 8. 2. In *handling* a text. § 9. 3. In *speaking* of the things of God § 10. Of duties. § 11. Of grace. § 12—16. The gospel is the *only* effectual means of salvation. § 17. 4. Distinguish the *different characters* of hearers. § 18. 5. Teach them to build their faith on solid grounds. § 19. 6. In every sermon bring some thing *practical.* § 20. 7. *Impose* nothing on them but what Christ hath imposed. § 21. 8. Remember you have to do with *each* of the human faculties. The understanding and § 22. The reasoning powers. § 23. The imagination. § 24. The memory. § 25. The conscience, will and affections. § 26. 9. Borrow the art of reasoning and persuasion from the holy scriptures. § 27. 10. Be not slothful or negligent in your weekly *preparation* for the pulpit. § 28. (III.) Take heed to your PUBLIC LABOURS. 1. Apply to the work with pious delight. § 29. 2. Get the heart into a temper of divine love. § 30. 3. Go forth into the strength of Christ. § 31. 4. Get the substance of your sermon wrought into your head and heart.

§ 32. 5. Do not confine yourself precisely to private preparations. § 33. 6. Proper attention should be paid to elocution. § 34. 7. Be very solicitous about success. § 35. (IV.) Take heed to your WHOLE CONVERSATION in the world. I. Let it be blameless and inoffensive. § 36. 2. Exemplary in all duties. § 37. 3. Grave and manly, yet pleasant and engaging. § 38. 4. Atttended with much self-denial and meekness. § 39. 5. Fruitful and edifying. § 40. (V.) These duties ENFORCED. § 41. By the decaying interest of religion. § 42. By the awful circumstances of a dying bed. § 43. By the solemn account we must give of our ministry. § 44. By all the terrors of the sacred volume, and, § 45. By all the joys of paradise.

§ 1. WHEN true religion falls under a general and remarkable decay, it is time for all that are concerned to awaken and rouse themselves to fresh vigour and activity, in their several posts of service. If the interests of piety and virtue are things fit to be encouraged and maintained in the world, if the kingdom of the blessed God among men be worthy to be supported, surely it is a necessary and becoming zeal for every one who hath the honour to be a minister of this kingdom, to take alarm at the appearance of such danger: and each of us should inquire, What can I do to strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die, as well as to recover what is lost? Let my brethren therefore in the ministry forgive me if I presume, at this season, to set before them a plain and serious exhortation. What I have to say on this subject shall be contained under four general heads.

I. Take heed to your own *personal religion*, as absolutely necessary to the right discharge of the ministerial office.

II. Take heed to your *private studies*, and preparation for public service.

III. Take heed to your *public labours*, and actual ministrations in the church.

IV. Take heed to your *conversation* in the world, and especially among the flock of Christ over which you preside. Bear with me while I enlarge a little upon each of these.

§ 2. (I.) Take heed to your PERSONAL RELIGION, especially to the work of God in your own heart, as absolutely necessary to the right discharge of the ministerial work. Surely there is the highest obligation on a preacher of the gospel to believe and practise what he preaches. He is under the most powerful and sacred engagements to be a christian himself, who goes forth to persuade the world to become christians. A minister of Christ, who is not a hearty believer in Christ, and a sincere follower of him, is a most shameful and inconsistent character, and forbids in practice what he recommends in words and sentences.

But it is not enough for a minister to have a common degree of piety and virtue, equal to the rest of christians, he should transcend and surpass others. The leaders and officers of the army under the blessed Jesus should be more expert in the christian exercises, and more advanced in the holy warfare, than their fellow-soldiers are supposed to be: 2 Cor. vi. 4. In all things approving ourselves (saith the apostle) as the ministers of God, in much patience, &c. and, I may add, in much of *every* christian grace. A small and low degree of it is not sufficient for a minister; see therefore not only that you practice every part and instance of piety and virtue which you preach to others, but *abound* therein, and be eminent beyond and above the rest, as your station in the church is more exalted, and as your character demands.

Now since your helps, in the way to heaven, both as to the knowledge and practice of duty, are much greater than what others enjoy, and your obstacles and impediments are in some instances less than theirs, it will be a shameful thing in you, as it is a matter of shame to any of us, to sink below the character of other christians in the practice of our holy religion, or even if we do not excel the most of them; since our obligations to it, as well as our advantages for it, are so much greater than those of others.

§ 3. 1. Take heed therefore to your own practical and vital religion, as to the *reality*, and the clear, undoubted *evidence* of it in your conscience. Give double diligence to make your calling and election sure. See to it, with earnest solicitude, that you be not mistaken in so necessary and important a concern; for a minister who preaches up the religion of Christ, yet has no evidence of it in his own heart, will lie under vast discouragements in his work; and if he be not a real christian himself, he will justly fall under double damnation.

Call your own soul often to account; examine the temper, the frame, and the motions of your heart with all holy severity, so that the *evidences* of your faith in Jesus, of your repentance for sin, and of your conversion to God, be many and fair, be strong and unquestionable; that you may walk on with courage and joyful hope toward heaven, and lead on the flock of Christ thither with holy assurance and joy.

2. Take heed to your own religion, as to the *liveliness* and *power* of it. Let it not be a sleepy thing in your bosom, but sprightly and active, and always awake. Keep your own soul near to God, and in the way in which you first came near him, i. e. by the mediation of Jesus Christ. Let no distance and estrangement grow between God and you, between Christ and you. Maintain much converse with God by prayer, by reading his word, by holy meditation, by heavenly-mindedness, and universal holiness in the frame and temper of your own spirit. Converse with God and with your own soul in the duties of secret religion, and walk always in the world as under the eye of God. Every leader of the flock of God, should act as Moses did, should live as "seeing him that is invisible."*

3. Take heed to your personal religion, as to the

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* Heb. xi. 27.

growth and *increase* of it. Let it be ever upon the advancing hand. Be tenderly sensible of every wandering affection toward vanity, every deviation from God and your duty, every rising sin, every degree of growing distance from God. Watch and pray much, and converse much with God, as one of his ministering angels in flesh and blood, and grow daily in conformity to God and your blessed Saviour, who is the first minister of his Father's kingdom, and the fairest image of his Father.

§ 4. Such a conduct will have several *happy influences* towards the fulfilling of your ministry, and will render you more fit for every part of your public ministrations.

1. Hereby you will improve in your acquaintance with divine things, and the spiritual parts of religion, that you may better teach the people both truth and duty. Those who are much with God may expect and hope that he will teach them the secret of his covenant, and the ways of his mercy, by communications of divine light to their spirits. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant."* LUTHER used to say, that he sometimes got more knowledge in a short time by prayer, than by the study and labour of many hours.

2. Hereby you will be more fit to speak to the great God at all times, as a son with holy confidence in him as your father, and you will be better prepared to pray with and for your people. You will have an habitual readiness for the work, and increase in the gift of prayer. You will obtain a treasure and fluency of sacred language, suited to address God on all occasions.

3. Hereby you will be kept near to the spring of all grace, to the fountain of strength and comfort in your work; you will be ever deriving fresh anointings, fresh influences, daily lights and powers, to enable you to go through all the difficulties and labours of your sacred office.

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* Ps. xxv. 14.

4. Hereby, when you come among men in your sacred ministrations, you will appear, and speak, and act like a man come from God; like Moses with a lustre upon his face, when he had conversed with God; like a minister of the court of heaven employed in a divine office; like a messenger of grace who hath just been with God, and received instructions from him; and the world will take cognizance of you, as they did of the apostles, that they were men who had been with Jesus.*

5. This will better furnish you for serious converse with the souls and consciences of men, by giving you experimental acquaintance with the things of religion, as they are transacted in the heart. You will learn more of the springs of sin and holiness, the workings of nature and grace, the deceitfulness of sin, the subtilty of temptation, and the holy skill of counterworking the snares of sin, and the devices of Satan, and all their designs to ruin the souls of men. You will speak with more divine compassion to wretched and perishing mortals; with more life and power to stupid sinners; with more sweetness and comfort to awakened consciences, and with more awful language and influence to backsliding christians.

6. You will hereby learn to preach more powerfully in all respects for the salvation of men, and talk more feelingly on every sacred subject, when the power, and sense, and life of godliness are kept up in your own spirit. Then on some special occasions it may not be improper to borrow the language of David the prophet, and of St. Paul and St. John, two great apostles, though it may be best in public to speak in the plural number.—"We have believed, therefore we have spoken; what we have heard and learned from Christ, we have declared unto you; what we have seen and felt, we are bold to speak; attend and we will tell you what God has done for our souls." You may then at proper seasons convince, direct and comfort others by the same words of light and power, of precept and

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* Acts iv. 13.

promise, of joy and hope, which have convinced, directed and comforted you: a word coming from the *heart* will sooner reach the heart.

§ 5. (II.) Take heed to your own PRIVATE STUDIES. These private studies are of various kinds, whether you consider them in general, as necessary to furnish the mind with knowledge, for the office of the sacred ministry; or, in particular, as necessary to prepare discourses for the pulpit.

Those *general* studies may be just mentioned, in this place, which furnish the mind with knowledge for the work of a minister; for though it be known you have passed through the several stages of science in your younger years, and have made a good improvement in them, yet a review of many of them will be found needful, and an increase in some (so far as leisure permits) may be proper and useful, even through the whole course of life.

But amongst all these inquiries and studies, and these various improvements of the mind, let us take heed that none of them carry our thoughts away too far from our chief and glorious design, that is, the ministry of the gospel of Christ. Let none of them intrench upon those hours which should be devoted to our study of the bible or preparations for the pulpit: and whensoever we find our inclinations too much attached to any particular human science, let us set a guard upon ourselves, lest it rob us of our diviner studies, and our best improvement. A minister should remember that himself, with all his studies, is consecrated to the service of the sanctuary. Let every thing be done therefore with a view to our great end; let all the rest of our knowledge be like lines drawn from the vast circumference of universal nature, pointing to that divine centre, God and religion; and let us pursue every part of science; with a design to gain better qualifications thereby for our sacred work.

§ 6. I come to speak of those *particular* studies which are preparatory for the public work of the pulpit; and here when you retire to compose a sermon, let your great end be ever kept in view, i. e. to say something for the honour of God, for the glory of Christ, and for the salvation of the souls of men: for this purpose a few rules may perhaps be of some service.

One great and *general rule* is, Ask advice of heaven by prayer about every part of your preparatory studies; seek the direction and assistance of the Spirit of God, for inclining your thoughts to proper subjects, for guiding you to proper scriptures, and framing your whole sermon, both as to the matter and manner, that it may attain the divine and sacred ends proposed.—But I insist not largely on this, here, because prayer for aids and counsels from heaven belongs to every part of your work, both in the closet, in the pulpit, and in your daily conversation.

§ 7. The *particular rules* for your preparatory work may be such as these:

1. In *choosing* your texts or themes of discourse, seek such as are most suited to do good to souls, according to the present wants, dangers and circumstances of the people; whether for the instruction of the ignorant; for the conviction of the stupid and senseless; for the melting and softening of the obstinate; for the conversion of the wicked; for the edification of converts; for the comfort of the timorous and mournful; for gentle admonition of backsliders, or more severe reproof. Some acquaintance with the general case and character of your hearers is needful for this end.

§ 8. 2. In *handling* the text, divide, explain, illustrate, prove, convince, infer, and apply in such a manner, as to do real service to men, and honour to our Lord Jesus Christ. Do not say within yourself, how much or how elegantly can I talk upon such a text, but what can I say most usefully to those who hear me, for the instruction of their minds, for the conviction of their consciences, and for the persuasion of their hearts? Be not fond of displaying your learned criticisms in clearing up the terms and phrases of a text, where scholars alone can be edified by them; nor spend the precious moments of the congregation in making them hear you explain what is clear enough before, and hath no need of explaining; nor in proving that which is so obvious that it wants no proof. This is little better than trifling with God and man.

Think not, how can I make a sermon soonest and easiest? but how can I make the *most profitable* sermon for my hearers? Not what fine things I can say, either in a way of criticism or philosophy, or in a way of oratory and harangue, but what powerful words can I speak to impress the consciences of them that hear with a lasting sense of moral, divine, and eternal things? Judge wisely what to leave out, as well as what to speak. Let not your chief design be, to work up a sheet, or to hold out an hour, but to save a soul.

§ 9. 3. In *speaking* of the great things of God and religion, remember you are a minister of Christ and the gospel, sent to publish to men what God has revealed by his prophets and apostles, and by his Son Jesus; and not a heathen philosopher, to teach the people merely what the light of reason can search out. You are not to stand up here as a professor of ancient or modern philosophy, nor as an usher in the school of PLATO or SENECA, or LOCKE; but as a teacher in the school of Christ, as a preacher of the New Testament. You are not a Jewish priest, to instruct men in the precise niceties of ancient judaism, legal rites and ceremonies; but you are a christian minister; let christianity therefore run through all your compositions and spread its glories over them.

It is granted, indeed, that reasonings from the light of nature have a considerable use in the ministry of the gospel. It is by the principles of natural religion, and by reasoning from them on the wonderful events of prophecy and miracles, &c. that we ourselves must learn the truth of the christian religion; and we must teach the people to build their faith of the gospel on just and rational grounds; this may perhaps, at some time or other, require a few whole discourses on some of the principal themes of natural religion, in order to introduce and display the religion of Jesus. But such occasions will seldom arise in the course of your ministry.

It is granted also, that it is very useful labour sometimes, in a sermon, to shew how far the light of nature and reason will carry us on in the search of duty and happiness, and then to manifest how happily the light of scripture supplies the deficiency of it; that the people may know how greatly they are indebted to the peculiar favour of God for the book of divine revelation.

§ 10. If you speak of the *duties* which men owe to God, or to one another, even those which are found out by reason and natural conscience, shew how the gospel of Christ hath advanced and refined every thing that nature and reason teach us. Enforce these duties by motives of christianity,* as well as by philosophical arguments drawn from the nature of things: stir up to the practice of them, by the examples of Christ and his apostles, by that heaven and that hell which are revealed to the world by Jesus Christ our Saviour; impress them on the heart by the constraining influence of the mercy of God, and the dying love of our Lord Jesus Christ, by his glorious appearance to judge the living and the dead, and by our blessed hope of attending him at that day. These are the appointed arguments of our holy religion, and may expect more divine success.

When you have occasion to represent what need there is of diligence and labour in the duties of holiness, shew also what aids are promised in the gospel to humble souls, who are sensible of their own frailty, to resist temptation, or to discharge religious and moral duties; and what influences of the Holy Spirit may be expected by those who seek it. Let them know that Christ is exalted to send forth the Spirit, to bestow repentance and sanctification as well as forgiveness, for without him we can do nothing.†

§ 11. If you would raise the hearts of your hearers to a just and high esteem of this gospel of *grace*, and impress them with an awful sense of the divine importance and worth of it, be not afraid to lay human nature low, and to represent it in its ruins by the fall of the first Adam. It is the vain exaltation of ruined nature that makes the gospel so much despised in our age. Labour therefore to make them see and feel the deplorable state of mankind, as described in scripture; that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and a sentence of death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Let them hear and know that Jews and Gentiles are all under sin; that there is none righteous, no, not one: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may appear guilty before God: Let them know that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any good thing; that we are without strength, alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance and darkness of our understanding, and are by nature children of disobedience, and children of wrath; that we are unable to recover ourselves out of these depths of wretchedness, without the condescensions of divine grace, and that the gospel of Christ is introduced as the only sovereign remedy and relief under all this desolation of nature, this overwhelming distress; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.* And they that wilfully and obstinately reject this message of divine love, must perish without remedy, and without hope; for there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful expectation of vengeance.†

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* See Disc. II. of this Vol. particularly, § 9—13.

† Acts v. 31. John xv. 5.

§ 12. These were the sacred weapons with which those were armed, to whom our exalted Saviour gave commission to travel through the dominions of Satan, which were spread over the heathen countries, and raise up a kingdom for himself amongst them. It was with principles, rules, and motives derived from the gospel, that they were sent to attack the reigning vices of mankind, to reform profligate nations, and to turn them from dumb idols to serve the living God. And though St. Paul was a man of learning above the rest, yet he was not sent to preach the enticing words of man's wisdom, nor to talk as the disputers of the age and the philosophers did in their schools; but his business was to preach Christ crucified; though this doctrine of the cross, and the Son of God suspended on it, was a stumbling-block to the Jews, and the Greeks counted it foolishness, yet to them that were called, both Jews and Greeks, this doctrine was the power of God, and the wisdom of God for the salvation of men. And therefore St. Paul determined to know nothing among them, in comparison of the doctrine of Christ and him crucified. These were the weapons of his warfare, which were mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strong holds of sin and Satan in the hearts of men, and brought every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. It was by the ministration of this gospel, that the fornicators were made chaste and holy, and idolaters became worshippers of the God of heaven; that thieves learnt honest labour, and the covetous were taught to seek treasures in heaven; the drunkards grew out of love with their cups, and renounced all intemperance: the revilers governed their tongues, and spoke well of their neighbours, and the cruel extortioners and oppressors learned to practise compassion and charity: these vilest of sinners, these children of hell, were made heirs of the kingdom of heaven; being washed, being sanctified, being justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

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* Acts iv. 12.

† Heb. x. 26.

§ 13. Had you all the refined science of *Plato*, or *Socrates;* all the skill in morals that ever was attained by *Zeno*, *Seneca*, or *Epictetus;* were you furnished with all the flowing oratory of *Cicero*, or the thunder of *Demosthenes;* were all these talents and excellencies united in one man, and you were the person so richly endowed—and could you employ them all in every sermon you preach—yet you could have no reasonable hope to convert and save one soul in Great Britain, where the gospel is published, while you lay aside the glorious gospel of Christ, and leave it entirely out of your discourses.

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* 1 Cor. vi. 3, &c.

Let me proceed yet further, and say, had you the fullest acquaintance that ever man acquired with all the principles and duties of natural religion, both in its regard to God and to your fellow-creatures; had you the skill and tongue of an angel to range all these in their fairest order, to place them in their fullest light, and to pronounce and represent the whole law of God with such force and splendor to a British auditory, as was done to the Israelites at mount Sinai, you might, perhaps, lay the consciences of men under deep conviction, for by the law is the knowledge of sin; but I am fully persuaded you would never reconcile one soul to God; you would never change the heart of one sinner, nor bring him into the favour of God, nor fit him for the joys of heaven, without this blessed gospel which is committed to your hands.

The great and glorious God is jealous of his own authority, and of the honour of his Son Jesus: nor will he condescend to bless any other methods for obtaining so divine an end, than what he himself has prescribed; nor will his Holy Spirit, whose office it is to glorify Christ, stoop to concur with any other sort of means for the saving of sinners, where the name and offices of his Son, the only appointed Saviour, are known, and despised and neglected. It is the gospel alone that is the power of God to salvation. If the prophets will not stand in his counsel, nor cause the people to hear his words, they will never be able to turn Israel from the iniquity of their ways, nor the evil of their doings.*

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* Jer. xxiii. 22.

§ 14. Was it not the special design of these doctrines of Christ, when they were first graciously communicated to the world, to reform the vices of mankind, which reason could not reform? and to restore the world to piety and virtue, for which the powers of reason appeared too feeble and impotent? The nations of the earth had made long and fruitless essays, what the light of nature and philosophy would do, to bring wandering, degenerate man back again to his Maker: fruitless and long essays indeed, when, after some thousands of years, the world, who had forgotten their Maker and his laws, still ran further from God, and plunged themselves into all abominable impieties and corrupt practices! Now if the all-wise God saw the gospel of Christ to be so fit and happy an instrument, for the recovery of wretched man to religion and morality; if he furnished his apostles with these doctrines for this very purpose, and pronounced a blessing upon them as his own appointment, why should we not suppose, that this gospel is still as fit, in its own nature, for the same purpose as it was at first? And why may we not hope the same heavenly blessing, in a great measure, to remain upon it, for these purposes, to the end of the world?

§ 15. Shall I inquire yet further; Is this a day when we should have the peculiar articles of the religion of Christ out of our ministrations, when the truth of them is boldly called in question, and denied by such multitudes who dwell among us? Is this a proper time for us to forget the name of Christ in our public labours, when the witty talents and reasonings of men join together, and labour hard to cast out his sacred name with contempt and scorn? Is it so seasonable a practice in this age, to neglect these evangelical themes, and to preach up virtue, without the special principles and motives with which Christ has furnished us, when there are such numbers amongst us who are fond of heathenism, who are endeavouring to introduce it again into a christian country, and spread the poison of infidelity through a nation called by his name? If this be our practice, our hearers will begin to think indeed, that infidels may have some reason on their side, and that the glorious doctrines of the gospel of Christ are not so necessary as our fathers thought them, while they find no mention of them in the pulpit, no use of them in our discourses from week to week, and from month to month, and yet we profess to preach for the salvation of souls. Will this be our glory, to imitate the heathen philosophers, and to drop the gospel of the Son of God? To be complimented by unbelievers as men of superior sense, and as deep reasoners, while we abandon the faith of Jesus, and starve the souls of our hearers, by neglecting to distribute to them this bread of life, which came down from heaven? O let us, who are his ministers, remember the last words of our departing Lord; "Go, preach the gospel to every nation: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned; and lo, I am with you alway, to the end of the world.* Let us fulfil the command, let us publish the threatening with the promise, and let us wait for the attendant blessing.

§ 16. Forgive me; my dear brother and friend, and you, my beloved and honoured brethren in the ministry, forgive me, if I have indulged too much vehemence in this part of my discourse; if I have given too great a loose to pathetic language on this important subject. I doubt not but your own consciences bear me witness, that this elevated voice is not the voice of reproof, but of friendly warning; and, I persuade myself, that you will join with me in this sentiment; that if ever we are so happy as to reform the lives of our hearers, to convert their hearts to God, and to train them up for heaven, it must be done by the principles of the gospel of Christ. On the occasion of such a head of advice, therefore, I assure myself you will forgive these warm emotions of spirit. Can there be any juster cause or season to exert fervour and zeal, than while we are pleading for the name, and honour, and kingdom of our adored Jesus? Let him live, let him reign for ever on his throne of glory; let him live upon our lips, and reign in all our ministrations; let him live in the hearts of all our hearers; let him live and reign through Great Britain, and through all the nations, till iniquity be subdued, till the kingdom of Satan be destroyed, and the whole world are become willing subjects to the sceptre of his grace!

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* Mark xvi. 15, 16. Matt. xxviii. 20.

Thus have I finished my *third* exhortation relating to the preparation of your sermons for the pulpit.

§ 17. 4. In addressing your discourse to your hearers, remember to distinguish the *different characters* of saints and sinners; the converted and the unconverted, the sincere christian, and the formal professor, the stupid and the awakened, the diligent and backsliding, the fearful or humble soul, the obstinate and presumptuous: and at various seasons introduce a word for each of them. Thus you will divide the word of God aright, and give to every one his portion.*

The general way of speaking to all persons in one view, and under one character, as though all your hearers were certainly true christians, and converted already, and wanted only a little further reformation of heart and life, is too common in the world, but I think it is a dangerous way of preaching: it hath a powerful and unhappy tendency to lull unregenerate sinners asleep in security, to flatter and deceive them with dreams of happiness, and make their consciences easy without a real conversion of heart to God.

Let your hearers know that there is a vast and unspeakable difference betwixt a saint and a sinner, one in Christ, and one out of Christ; between one whose heart is in the state of corrupt nature or unrenewed, and one that is in a state of grace, and renewed to faith and holiness; between one who is only born of the flesh, and is a child of wrath, and one who is born again, or born of the Spirit, and is become a child of

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* 2 Tim. ii 15.

God, a member of Christ, and an heir of heaven. Let them know that this distinction is great and necessary; a most real change, and of infinite importance; and however it has been derided by men, it is glorious in the eyes of God, and it will be made to appear so at the last day, in the eyes of men and angels. That little treatise, written by the learned Mr. JOHN JENNINGS, concerning *preaching Christ* and *experimental preaching*, has many valuable hints relating to these two last particulars of my exhortation.*

§ 18. 5. Lead your hearers wisely into the knowledge of the *truth*, and teach them to build their faith upon solid grounds. Let them first know why they are christians, that they may be firmly established in the belief and profession of the religion of Christ; that they may be guarded against all the assaults of temptation and infidelity in this evil day, and may be able to render a reason of the hope that is in them: furnish them with arguments in opposition to the rude cavils and blasphemies which are frequently thrown out into the world, against the name and the doctrines of the holy Jesus.

Then let the great, the most important, and most necessary articles of our religion be set before your hearers in their fairest light. Convey them into the understandings of those of meanest capacity, by condescending sometimes to plain and familiar methods of speech; prove these important doctrines and duties to them by all proper reasons and arguments: but as to the introducing of controversies into the pulpit, be not fond of it, nor frequent in it. In your common course of preaching avoid disputes, especially about things of less importance, without an apparent call of providence. Religious controversies, frequently introduced, without real necessity, have an unhappy tendency to hurt the spirit of true godliness, both in the hearts of preachers and hearers.†

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* These are DISC. II. and III. of this Volume.

† 1 Tim. iv. 7.

And beware of laying too much stress on the peculiar notions, terms, and phrases of the little sects and parties in christianity: take heed that you do not make your hearers bigots and uncharitable, while you endeavour to make them knowing christians. Establish them in all the chief and most important articles of the gospel of Christ, without endeavouring to render those who differ from you odious in the sight of your hearers. Whensoever you are constrained to declare your disapprobation of particular *opinions*, keep up and manifest your love to the *persons* of those who espouse them, and especially if they are persons of virtue and piety.

§ 19. 6. Do not content yourself to compose a sermon of mere doctrinal truths and articles of belief, but into every sermon (if possible) bring something practical. It is true, knowledge is the foundation of practice; the head must be furnished with a degree of knowledge, or the heart cannot be good: but take heed that dry speculations, and mere schemes of orthodoxy, do not take up too large a part of your compositions; and be sure to impress it frequently on your hearers, that holiness is the great *end* of all knowledge, and of much more value than the sublimest speculations; nor is there any *doctrine* but what requires some correspondent *practice* of piety or virtue.

And among the practical parts of christianity, sometimes make it your business to insist on those subjects which are inward and spiritual, and which go by the name of experimental religion. Now and then take such themes as these, (viz.) the first awakenings of the conscience of a sinner, by some special and awful providence, by some particular passages in the word of God, in pious writings, or public sermons, the inward terrors of mind, and fears of the wrath of God, which sometimes accompany such awakenings; the temptations which arise to divert the mind from them, and to sooth the sinner in the course of his iniquities; the inward conflicts of the spirit in these seasons, the methods of relief under such temptations, the arguments that may fix the heart and will for God against all the enticements and opposition of the world; the labours of the conscience fluctuating between hope and fear; the rising and working of indwelling sin in the heart, the subtile excuses framed by the flesh for the indulgence of it; the peace of God derived from the gospel, allaying the inward terrors of the soul under a sense of guilt; the victories obtained over strong corruptions and powerful temptations, by the faith of unseen things, by repeated addresses to God in prayer, by trusting in Jesus, the great Mediator, who is made of God to us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

While you are treating on these subjects, give me leave to put you again in mind, that it will sometimes have a very happy influence on the minds of hearers, to speak what you have learnt from your *own* experience, though there is no need that you should tell them publicly it is your own: you may inform them what you have borrowed from your own observation, and from the experience of christians, ancient or modern, who have passed through the same trials, who have wrestled with the same corruptions of nature, who have grappled with the same difficulties, and at last have been made conquerors over the same temptations. As face answers face in the glass, so the heart of one man answers to another; and the workings of the different principles of flesh and spirit, corrupt nature and renewing grace, have a great deal of resemblance in the hearts of different persons who have passed through them. This sort of instruction, drawn from just and solid experience, will animate and encourage the young christian, that begins to shake off the slavery of sin, and to set his face toward heaven: this will make it appear that religion is no impracticable thing. It will establish and comfort the professors of the gospel, and excite them with new vigor, to proceed in the way of faith and holiness; it will raise a stedfast courage and hope, and will generally obtain a most happy effect upon the souls of the hearers, beyond all that you can say to them for principles of mere reasoning, and dry speculation; and especially where you have the concurrent experience of scriptural examples.

§ 20. 7. Whether you are discoursing of doctrine or duty, take great care that you *impose* nothing on your hearers, either as a matter of faith or practice, but what your Lord and Master, Christ Jesus, has imposed.

But in this state of frailty and imperfection, dangers attend us on either hand. As we must take heed that we do not add the fancies of men to our divine religion, so we should take equal care that we do not curtail the appointments of Christ. With a sacred vigilance and zeal we should maintain the plain, express, and necessary articles, that we find evidently written in the word of God, and suffer none of them to be lost through our default. The world has been so long imposed upon, by these shameful additions of men to the gospel of Christ, that they seem now to be resolved to bear them no longer. But they are unhappily running into another extreme: because several sects and parties of christians have tacked on so many false and unbecoming ornaments to christianity, they resolve to deliver her from these disguises; but while they are paring off all this foreign trumpery, they too often cut her to the quick, and sometimes let out her life-blood, (if I may so express it) and maim her of her very limbs and vital parts. Because so many irrational notions and follies have been mixed up with the christian scheme, it is now a modish humour of the age to renounce almost every thing that reason doth not discover, and to reduce christianity itself to little more than the light of nature, and the dictates of reason. And under this sort of influence, there are some who are believers of the bible, and the divine mission of Christ, and dare not renounce the gospel itself; yet they interpret some of the peculiar and express doctrines of it, into so poor, so narrow, and so jejune a meaning, that they suffer but little to remain beyond the articles of natural religion. This leads some of the learned and polite men of the age to explain away the sacrifice and atonement made for our sins by the death of Christ, and to bereave our religion of the ordinary aids of the Holy Spirit; both which are plainly and expressly revealed, frequently repeated in the New Testament, and which are two of the chief glories of the blessed gospel; and which, perhaps, are two of the chief uses of those sacred names of the Son and the Holy Spirit, into which we are baptized. It is this very humour that persuades some persons, to reduce the injury and mischief that we have sustained by the sin and fall of Adam, to so slight a bruise, and so inconsiderable a wound, that only a small matter of grace is needful for our recovery; and accordingly they impoverish the rich and admirable remedy of the gospel, to a very culpable degree, supposing no more to be necessary for the restoration of man, than those few ingredients, which, in their opinion, make up the whole composition. Hence it comes to pass, that the doctrine of regeneration, or an entire change of corrupt nature, by a principle of divine grace, is almost lost out of their christianity.

§ 21. 8. Remember that you have to do with the understanding, reason and memory of man, with the heart and conscience, with the will and affections; and therefore you must use every method of speech, which may be most proper to engage and employ each of these faculties or powers of human nature, on the side of religion, and in the interests of God and the gospel.

Your first business is with the *understanding*, to make even the lower parts of your auditory know what you mean. Endeavour, therefore, to find out all the clearest and most easy forms of speech, to convey divine truths into the minds of men. Seek to obtain a perspicuous style, and a clear and distinct manner of speaking, that you may effectually impress the understanding, while you pronounce the words, that you may so exactly imprint on the minds of the hearers, the same ideas which you yourself have conceived, that they may never mistake your meaning. This talent is sooner attained in your younger years, by having some judicious friend to hear or read over your discourses, and inform you where perspicuity is wanting in your language, and where the hearers may be in danger of mistaking your sense. For want of this, some young preachers have fixed themselves in such an obscure way of writing and talking, as hath very much prevented their hearers from obtaining distinct ideas of their discourse. And if a man gets such an unhappy habit, he will be sometimes talking to the air, and make the people stare at him, as though he were speaking some unknown language.

§ 22. Remember you have to do with the *reasoning* powers of man, in preaching the gospel of Christ; for though this gospel is revealed from heaven, and could never have been discovered by all the efforts of human reason, yet the reason of man must judge of several things relating to it, (viz.) It is reason must determine, whether the evidence of its heavenly original be clear and strong: it is reason must judge whether such a doctrine, or such a duty be contained in the gospel, or may be justly deduced from it: it is the work of human reason to compare one scripture with another, and to find out the true sense of any particular text by this means; and it is reason also must give its sentence, whether a doctrine, which is pretended to be contained in scripture, be contrary to the eternal and unchangeable relations and reasons of things; and if so, then reason may pronounce that this doctrine is not from God, nor can be givin us by divine revelation. Reason, therefore, hath its office and proper province, even in matters of revelation; yet it must always be confessed, that some propositions may be revealed to us from heaven, which may be so far superior to the limits and sphere of our reasoning powers, in the present state, that human reason ought not to reject them, because it cannot fully understand them, nor clearly and perfectly reconcile them; unless it plainly see a natural absurdity in them, real impossibilty, or a plain inconsistence with other parts of divine revelation.

§ 23. And in your representation of things to the reason and understanding of men, it would sometimes be of special advantage to have some power over the fancy or *imagination:* this would help us to paint our themes in their proper colours, whether of the alluring or the forbidding kind. And now and then we should make use of both, in order to impress the idea on the soul with happier force and success.

When you would describe any of the personal or social virtues of life, so as to enforce their practice, set yourself to display the beauties and excellencies of them, in their own agreeable and lovely forms and colours. But do not content yourself with this alone: this is not sufficient to allure the degenerate and sensual mind of man to practise them. Few persons are of so happy a disposition, and so refined a genius, as to be wrought upon by the mere aspect of such inviting qualities. Endeavour, therefore, to illustrate the virtues by their contrary vices, and set forth these moral mischiefs, both in their deformities and their dangerous consequences, before the eyes of your hearers. Think it not enough, to represent to them the shining excellencies of humility and benevolence, of justice, veracity, gratitude, and temperance; but produce to sight the vile features of pride, envy, malice, spite, knavery, falsehood, revenge, sensuality, luxury, and the rest of that cursed train, in their proper places and seasons. Make it evident, how contrary they are both to the law of God, and the gospel of Christ; describe them in all their several forms, shapes, and appearance: strip them of their false pretences and disguises; shew how they insinuate and exert themselves in different occurrences of life, and different constitutions; and pursue them so narrowly, as it were with a hue and cry, with such exact descriptions, that if any of these vices are indulged by your hearers, they may be found out by strict self-examination, that the consciences of the guilty may be laid under conviction of sin, and be set in the way of repentance and reformation.

Whensoever any vice has found the way into our bosoms, and makes its nest there, its proper and evil features and characters ought to be marked out by the preacher with great accuracy, that it may be discovered to our consciences, in order to its destruction: for these wretched hearts of ours are naturally so fond of all their own inmates, that they are too ready to hide their ill qualities from our own sight and conviction, and thus they cover and save them from the sentence of mortification and death which is denounced against every sin in the word of God. And let the preacher and the hearer both remember, that sin must be pursued to the death, or else there is no life to the soul. Only the christian, who "by the spirit mortifies the sinful deeds of the body," has the promise of salvation and life.*

§ 24. Think farther, that you should take some care also to engage the *memory*, and to make it serve the purposes of religion. Let your reasonings be ever so forcible and convincing, let your language be ever so clear and intelligible, yet if the whole discourse glide over the ear in a smooth and delightful stream, and if nothing be fixed on the memory, the sermon is in great danger of being lost and fruitless. Now, to avoid this danger, I would recommend to you the care of a clear and distinct METHOD; and let this method *appear* to the hearers, by the *division* of your discourses into several plain and distinct particulars, so that the whole may not be a mere loose harangue, without evident members, and discernible rests and pauses. Whatsoever proper and natural divisions belong to your subject, mark them out by the numbers, 1st, 2d, 3d, &c. This will afford you time to breathe, in the delivery of your discourse, and give your hearers a short season for the recollection of the particulars, which have been mentioned before.

But in this matter take care always to maintain a happy *medium*, so as never to arise to such a number of particulars, as may make your sermon look like a tree full of branches, in the winter, without the beautiful, profitable appearance of leaves and fruit.

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* Rom. viii. 13.

Cast the scheme of your discourse into some distinct, general heads, and lesser subdivisions, in your first sketches and rudiments of it: this will greatly assist you in the amplification; this will help to preserve a just method throughout, and secure you from repeating the same thoughts too often; this will enable you to commit your sermon to your own memory the better, that you may deliver it with ease: and it will greatly assist the understanding as well as the memory of all that hear you. It will furnish them with matter and method for an easy recollection at home, for meditation in their devout retirement, and for religious conference or rehearsal, after the public worship is ended.

§ 25. Consider again, your business is with the *consciences*, and *wills*, and *affections* of men. A mere conviction of the reason and judgment, by the strongest arguments, is hardly sufficient, in matter of piety and virtue, to command the will into obedience; because the appetites of the flesh and the interests of this world are engaged on the opposite side. It is a very common case with the sons and daughters of Adam, to see and know their proper duty, and to have the reasons that enforce it fresh in their memory; and yet the powerful efforts of the flesh and the world withhold the will from the practice, forbid its holy resolutions for God and heaven, or keep them always feeble, doubtful, and wavering. The God of nature therefore has furnished mankind with those powers which we call passions, or affections of the heart, in order to excite the will with superior vigour and activity, to avoid the evil, and pursue the good. Upon this account the preacher must learn to address the passions in a proper manner; and I cannot but think it a very imperfect character of a christian preacher, that he reasons well upon every subject, and talks clearly upon his text, if he has nothing of the *pathetic* in his ministrations, no talent at all to strike the passions of the heart.

Awaken your spirit, therefore, in your compositions; contrive all lively, forcible and penetrating forms of speech, to make your words powerful and impressive on the hearts of your hearers, when light is first let into the mind. Practise all the awful and solemn ways of address to the conscience, all the soft and tender influences on the heart. Try all methods to rouse and awaken the cold, the stupid, the sleepy race of sinners; learn all the language of holy jealousy and terror, to affright the presumptuous; all the compassionate and encouraging manners of speaking, to comfort, encourage, and direct the awakened, the penitent, the willing and the humble; all the winning and engaging modes of discourse and expostulation, to constrain the hearers of every character to attend. Seek this happy skill of reigning and triumphing over the hearts of an assembly: persuade them with power to love and practise all the important duties of godliness, in opposition to the flesh and the world; endeavour to kindle the soul to zeal in the holy warfare, and to make it bravely victorious over all the enemies of its salvation.

But in all these efforts of sacred oratory, remember still you are a minister of the gospel of Christ: and as your style must not affect the pomp and magnificence of the theatre, so neither should you borrow your expressions, or your metaphors, from the coarsest occupations, or any of the mean and uncleanly occurrences in life. Swell not the sound of your periods, with ambitious or pedantic phrases; dress not your serious discourses to the people in too glittering array, with an affectation of gaudy and flaunting ornaments, nor ever descend to so low a degree of familiarity and meanness, as to sink your language below the dignity of your subject, or your office.

§ 26. 9. As the art of reasoning, and the happy skill of persuasion are both necessary to be used in framing your discourses, so both of them may be borrowed, in a good measure, from the *holy scriptures*. The word of God will furnish you with a rich variety of forms, both to prove and persuade. Clear instruction, convincing argument, and pathetic address to the heart, may be all drawn from the sacred writers. Many fine strokes of true logic and rhetoric are scattered through that divine book, the bible: words of force and elegance, to charm and allure the soul, glitter and sparkle like golden ore in some peculiar parts of it. You may find there noble examples of the awful and compassionate style, and inimitable patterns of the terrible and the tender. Shall I therefore take the freedom once again, to call upon you to remember, that you are a minister of the word of God, a professor and preacher of the bible, and not a mere philosopher upon the foot of reason, nor an orator in a heathen school?

And as for bright, warm and *pathetic language*, to strike the imagination, or to affect the heart, to kindle the divine passions, or to melt the soul; none of the heathen orators can better furnish you, than the moving expostulations of the ancient prophets, the tender and sprightly odes of holy David, or the affectionate part of the letters of St. Paul, which even his enemies, in the church of Corinth, confess to be powerful. The eastern writers, among whom we number the Jews, were particularly famous for lively oratory, bright images, and bold and animated figures of speech. Could I have heard Isaiah or Jeremiah pronouncing some of their sermons, or attended St. Paul in some of his pathetic strains of preaching, I should never mourn a want of acquaintance with Tully or Demosthenes.

A preacher, whose mind is well stored and enriched with the divine sense and sentiments, the reasoning and language of scripture, (and especially if these are wrought in his heart by christian experience) supposing his other talents are equal to those of his brethren, will always have a considerable advantage over them, in composing such discourses as shall be most popular and most useful in christian assemblies; and he may better expect the presence and blessing of God, to make his word triumph over the souls of men, and will generally speak to their hearts with more power for their eternal salvation. Shew me one sinner turned to God and holiness by the labours of a preacher, who is generally entertaining the audience with a long and weighty chain of reasoning, from the principles of nature, and teaching virtue in the language of heathen philosophy; and, I think I may undertake to shew you ten who have been convinced and converted, and have become holy persons and lively christians, by an attendance upon a spiritual, affectionate and experimental ministry: the whole assembly hang attentive upon the lips of a man who speaks to the heart, as well as to the understanding, and who can enforce his exhortations from a manifold experience of the success of them. They delight to hear the preacher, whose plain and powerful address to the conscience, and whose frequent methods of reasoning in the pulpit, have been drawn from what they themselves have read in scripture concerning God and man, sin and duty, our misery and divine mercy, death, resurrection, judgment, heaven and hell. They attend with holy reverence and affection on such a minister, whose frequent argument, both in points of doctrine and practice, is, Thus saith the Lord.

§ 27. 10. Be not slothful or negligent in your weekly *preparation* for the pulpit; take due time for it; begin so early in the week, that you may have time enough before you to furnish your preparations well; and always allow for accidental occurrences, either from indisposition of body, from interruptions by company, from unforeseen business or trouble, &c. that you may not be reduced to the necessity of hurrying over your work in haste, at the end of the week, and serving God and the souls of men with poor, cold and careless performances. Remember that awful word, though spoken on another occasion, "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully."* Manage so as to leave generally the Saturday evening, or, at least, the Lord's day morning entire, for the review and correction of your discourse, and for your own spiritual improvement, by the sermon which you have prepared for the people.

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* Jer. xlviii. 10.

If it should happen that the mere providence of God, without any neglect of yours, has hindered you from making so good a preparation as you designed, you may, with courage and hope of divine assistance, venture into the assembly with more slender and imperfect furniture: but if your conscience tells you, that your preparations are very slight, and the neglect is your own, you have less reason to expect aids from above, without great humiliation for your negligence. And what if God should forsake you so far in the pulpit, as to expose you to public shame, and thus punish you for your carelessness in the midst of the congregation!

Study your matter well, by meditation and reading, and comparing scriptures together, till you have gotten it completely within your grasp and survey: then if you should happen to be so situated in preaching, that you could not refresh your memory by the inspection of your paper every minute, yet you will not be exposed to hurry and confusion; a ready thought will suggest something pertinent to your purpose. Let your preparations be usually so perfect, that you may be able to fill up the time allotted for the discourse with solid sense, and proper language, even if your natural spirits should happen to be heavy and indisposed at the hour of preaching, and if your mind should have no new thoughts arising in the delivery of your discourse. Labour carefully in the formation of your sermons in your younger years: a habit of thinking and speaking well, procured by the studies of youth, will make the labour of your middle age easy, when, perhaps, you will have much less time and leisure.

§ 28. (III.) Take heed to your PUBLIC LABOURS and ministrations in the church; which may be done, by attending to the following particulars.

1. Apply yourself to your work with pious delight; not as a toil or task, which you wish were done and ended, but as matter of inward pleasure to your own soul: enter the pulpit with the solemnity of holy joy, that you have an opportunity to speak for the honour of God; and the salvation of men. Then you will not

preach or pray with sloth or laziness, with coldness or indifference: we do not use to be slothful and indifferent in the pursuit of our joys, or the relish of our chosen pleasures. Stir up yourself to the work with sacred vigour, that the assembly may feel what you speak. But if you deliver the most solemn and lively compositions, like a man that is half asleep, it will be no wonder if your hearers slumber. A dull preacher makes a drowsy church.

§ 29. 2. Endeavour to get your heart into a temper of divine love, zealous for the laws of God, affected with the grace of Christ, and compassionate for the souls of men. With this temper engage in public work. Let your frame of spirit be holy with regard to your own inward devotion, near to God, and delighting in him: and let it be zealous for the name of Christ, and the increase of his kingdom. O pity perishing sinners, when you are sent to invite them to be reconciled to God. Let not self be the subject or the end of your preaching, but Christ, and the salvation of souls. "We preach not ourselves," saith the apostle, "but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves, your servants, for Jesus' sake."* Speak as a dying preacher to dying hearers, with the utmost compassion to the ignorant, the tempted, the foolish, and the obstinate; for all these are in danger of eternal death. Attend your work with the utmost desire to save souls from hell, and enlarge the kingdom of Christ your Lord.

Go into the public assembly with a design (if God please) to strike and persuade some souls there into repentance, faith, holiness and salvation. Go to open blind eyes, to unstop deaf ears, to make the lame walk, to make the foolish wise, to raise those that are dead in trespasses and sins to a heavenly and divine life, and to bring guilty rebels to return to the love and obedience of their Maker, by Jesus Christ, the great Reconciler, that they may be pardoned and saved. Go to diffuse the savour of the name of Christ and his gospel, through a whole assembly; and to allure souls to partake of grace and glory.

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* 2 Cor. iv. 5.

§ 30. 3. Go forth in the *strength of Christ*, for these glorious effects are above your own strength, and transcend all the powers of the brightest preachers. "Be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus."* "Without him we can do nothing."† Go with a design to work wonders of salvation on sinful creatures, but in the strength of Jesus, who hath all power given him in heaven and earth, and hath promised to be with his ministers to the end of the world.‡ Pray earnestly for the promised aids of the Spirit, and plead with God, who hath sent you forth in the service of the gospel of his Son, that you may not return empty, but bring in a fair harvest of converts to heaven. It is the Lord of the harvest who only can give this divine success to the labourers. "He that planteth is nothing, and he that watereth is nothing, but all our hope is in God, who giveth the increase."§

§ 31. 4. Get the *substance* of your sermon, which you have prepared for the pulpit, so wrought into your head and heart, by review and meditation, that you may have it at command, and speak to your hearers with freedom; not as if you were reading or repeating your lesson to them, but as a man sent to teach and persuade them to faith and holiness. Deliver your discourses to the people, like a man that is talking to them in good earnest about their most important concerns, and their everlasting welfare; like a messenger sent from heaven, who would fain save sinners from hell, and allure souls to God and happiness. Do not indulge that lazy way of reading over your prepared paper, as a school-boy does an oration out of Livy or Cicero, who has no concern in the things he speaks. But let all the warmest zeal for God, and compassion for perishing men, animate your voice and countenance; and let the people see and feel, as well as hear, that you are speaking to them about things of infinite moment, and in which your own eternal interest lies as well as theirs.

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* 2 Tim. ii. 1.

† John xv. 5.

‡ Matt. xxviii. 20.

§ 1 Cor. iii. 7.

§ 32. 5. If you pray and hope for the assistance of the Spirit of God, in every part of your work, do not resolve always to *confine* yourself precisely to the mere words and sentences which you have written down in your private preparations. Far be it from me to encourage a preacher to venture into public work, without due preparation by study, and a regular composition of his discourse. We must not serve God with what costs us nothing. All our wisest thoughts and cares are due to the sacred service of the temple: but what I mean is, that we should not impose upon ourselves just such a number of precomposed words and lines to be delivered in the hour, without daring to speak a warm sentiment that comes fresh upon the mind. Why may you not hope for some lively turns of thought, some new pious sentiments, which may strike light, and heat, and life into the understandings and the hearts of those that hear you? In the zeal of your ministrations, why may you not expect some bright, and warm, and pathetic forms of argument and persuasion, to offer themselves to your lips, for the more powerful conviction of sinners, and the encouragement and comfort of humble christians? Have you not often found such an enlargement of thought, such a variety of sentiment, and freedom of speech, in common conversation, upon an important subject, beyond what you were apprized of before hand? And why should you forbid yourself this natural advantage in the pulpit, and in the fervour of sacred ministrations, where also you have more reason to hope for divine assistance?

Besides, for us who are protestant dissenters, and confine ourselves to no set forms in prayer, it seems more unreasonable to confine our lips constantly and precisely to the words written in our papers in the work of preaching. Do we plead so earnestly for the liberty of prayer, and yet never give our spirits a liberty to express their present warm, lively and affectionate thoughts, in ministering the gospel of Christ, under the hopes of his assistance? Why must we never dare to add any thing to our premeditated notes, in speaking to the people, while we take this freedom in speaking to the blessed God? As there has been many a fervent and devout petition offered to God, in our addresses to him, which had not been thought of before, so many a sentence, we had never written, has been delivered in our addresses to the people with glorious success; it has come more immediately and warm from the heart, and may have been blessed of God to save a soul.

§ 33. 6. Here would be a proper place to interpose a few directions concerning *elocution*, and the whole manner of delivery of your discourse to the people, which includes both a voice, gesture and behaviour, suited to the subject and design of every part of the sermon. But the rules that are necessary for this part of our work, are much better derived from books written on this subject, from an observation of the best preachers, in order to imitate them, and an avoidance of that which we find offensive, when we ourselves are hearers.

If I had a design to go through the whole of the ministerial office, I should here also find a proper place to speak of the manner of your performance of *public prayer*, of your direction of that part of worship which is called *psalmody*, and of your ministration of the *ordinances* of baptism and the Lord's supper; but this would require much more time, and my chief design was to put you in mind of a few useful things which relate to *preaching*. I proceed, therefore, to the last particular.

§ 34. 7. Be very solicitous about the *success* of your labours in the pulpit. Water the seed sown, not only with public, but secret prayer. Plead with God importunately, that he would not suffer you to labour in vain. Be not like that foolish bird, the ostrich, which lays her eggs in the dust, and leaves them there, regardless whether they come to life or not: God hath not given her understanding.* But let not this folly be your character or practice: labour, and watch, and pray, that your sermons and the fruit of your studies may become words of divine life to souls.

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* Job xxxix. 14—17.

It is an observation of pious Mr. BAXTER, which I have read somewhere in his works, that he has never known any considerable success from the brightest and noblest talents, nor the most excellent kind of preaching, and that even where the preachers themselves have been truly religious, if they have not had a solicitous concern for the success of their ministrations. Let the awful and important thought of souls being saved by my preaching, or left to perish and be condemned to hell by my negligence; I say, let this awful and tremendous thought dwell ever upon your spirit. We are made watchmen to the house of Israel, as Ezekiel was, and if we give no warning of approaching danger, the souls of multitudes may perish through our neglect, but the blood of souls will be terribly required at our hands.*

§ 35. (IV.) Take heed to your WHOLE CONVERSATION in the world; let that be managed not only as becomes a professor of christianity, but as becomes a minister of the gospel of Christ. Now, amongst other rules which may render your conversation agreeable to your character, I entreat you to take these few into your thoughts.

1. Let it be *blameless* and *inoffensive*. Be vigilant, be temperate in all things, not only as a soldier of Christ, but as an under-leader of part of his army. Be temperate, and abstain sometimes even from lawful delights, that you may make the work of self-denial easy, and that you may bear hardship as becomes a soldier.† But always watchful, lest you be too much entangled with the affairs of this life, that you may better please him who has chosen you for an officer in his battalions, and that you may not be easily surprised into the snares of sin. Guard against a love of pleasure, a sensual temper, an indulgence of appetite, an excessive relish of wine or dainties; these carnalize the soul, and give occasion to the world to reproach us but too justly.

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* Ezek. iii. 17, &c.

† 2 Tim. ii 3, 4.

§ 36. 2. Let your conversation be *examplary* in all the duties of holiness and virtue; in all the instances of worship and piety toward God, and in those of justice, honour, and hearty benevolence towards men. Be forward and ready to engage in every good word and work, that you may be a pattern and a leader of the flock; that you may be able to address the people committed to your care in the language of the blessed apostle, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."* "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample; for our conversation is in heaven."† "Those things, which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do you practise, and the God of peace shall be with you."‡

§ 37. 3. Let your conversation be *grave* and manly, yet *pleasant* and engaging. Let it be grave, manly, and venerable. Remember your station in the church, that you sink not into levity and vain trifling, that you indulge not any ridiculous humours or childish follies, below the dignity of your character: keep up the honour of your office among men, by a remarkable sanctity of manners, by a decent and manly deportment. Remember, that our station does not permit any of us to set up for a buffoon; nor will it be any glory to us to excel in farce and comedy. Let others obtain the honour of being good jesters, and of having it in their power to spread a laugh round the company when they please; but let it be our ambition to act on the stage of life, as men who are devoted to the service of the God of heaven, to the real benefit of mankind on earth, and to their eternal interests.

Yet there is no need that your behaviour should have any thing stiff or haughty, any thing sullen or gloomy in it. There is an art of *pleasing* in conversation, that will maintain the honour of a superior office, without a morose silence, without an affected stiffness, and without a haughty superiority. A pleasant story may proceed, without offence, from a minister's lips; but he should never aim at the title of a man of *mirth*, nor abound in such tales as carry no useful instruction in them, no lessons of piety, or wisdom, or virtue.

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* 1 Cor. xi. 1. † Phil. iii. 17, 20. ‡ Phil. iv. 9.

Let a cheerful freedom, a generous friendship, and an innocent pleasure, generally appear on your countenance; and let your speech be ever kind and affectionate. Do not put on any forbidding airs, nor let the humblest soul be afraid to speak to you. Let your whole carriage be civil and affable; let your address to men be usually open and free, such as may allure persons to be open and free with you in the important concerns of their souls. Seek, as far as possible, to obtain all your pious designs, by soft and gentle methods of persuasion.

If you are ever called to the unpleasing and painful work of *reproof*, this may be done effectually, upon some occasions, without speaking a word. When vicious, or uncleanly, or unbecoming speeches arise in public conversation, a sudden silence, with an assumed gravity, will often be a sensible and sufficient reproof. Or where words of admonition may not be proper, because of the company, sometimes a sudden departure may be the best way to acquaint them with your disapprobation.

But there are cases wherein such a tacit rebuke is not sufficient to answer your character and your office. Sometimes it is necessary for a minister to bear a public and express witness against shocking immorality, or against vile and impious discourse. Yet, in general, it must be said, if a reproof can be given in secret, it is best, and most likely to prevail upon the offender, because it less irritates his passions, nor awakens his pride to vindicate himself, and to despise all reproof.

Whensoever Providence calls you to this work, make it appear to the transgressor that you do it with *regret* and pain: let him see you are not giving vent to your own wrath, but seeking his interest and welfare; and that, were it not for the honour of God and for his good, you would gladly excuse yourself from the ungrateful task; and that it is a work in which your spirit takes no delight. If the case and circumstances require some speeches that are awful and severe, let it appear still that your *love* and *pity* are the prevailing passions; and that even your anger has something divine and holy in it, as being raised and pointed against the sin rather than against the sinner.

Study to make the whole of your carriage and discourse amongst men so engaging, as may invite strangers to love you, and allure them to love religion for your sake.

§ 38. 4. In order to attain the same end, let your conversation be attended with much *self-denial* and *meekness:* avoid the character of humourist, nor be unreasonably fond of little things, nor peevish for the want of them. Suppress rising passion early. If you are providentially led into argument and dispute, whether on themes of belief or practice, be very watchful lest you run into fierce contention, into angry and noisy debate. Guard against every word that savours of malice, or of bitter strife: watch against the first stirrings of sudden wrath or resentment: bear with patience the contradiction of others, and forbear to return railing for railing. A minister must be gentle, and not apt to strive, but meekly instructing gainsayers.

He should never be ready either to give or take offence; but he should teach his people to neglect and bury resentment, to be deaf to reproaches, and to forgive injuries, by his own example, even as God has forgiven all of us. Let us imitate his divine pattern, who cancels and forgives our infinite offences for the sake of Jesus Christ. "A bishop must not be a brawler or a striker;"* but such as the apostle was, "gentle among the people, even as a nurse cherishes her children;" and being affectionately desirous of their welfare, we should be willing to impart not only the gospel of God to them, but any thing that is dear to us, for the salvation of their souls.†

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* 1 Tim. iii. 3.

† 1 Thess. ii. 7, 8.

Never suffer any differences (if possible) to arise between you and any of the people who are committed to your care, or attend on your ministrations: this will endanger the success of your best labours among them, and, for this reason, though you visit families with freedom, yet avoid all unnecessary inquiries into their domestic affairs by a prying curiosity; the pleasure of such secrets will never pay for the danger that attends them, and your own business is sufficient for you.

Avoid entering into any of the little private and personal quarrels that may arise among them, unless Providence give you an evident call to become a peacemaker; but even in this blessed work there is some danger of disobliging one side or the other; for though both sides are often to blame, yet each supposes himself so much in the right, that your softest and most candid intimation of their being culpable, even in little things, will sometimes awaken the jealousy of one or both parties against you; this will tend to abate their esteem of you, and give a coldness to their attention on your sacred services. We had need be wise as serpents in this case, and harmless as doves.*

§ 39. 5. Let your conversation be as fruitful and *edifying* as your station and opportunities will allow. Wheresoever you come, use your utmost endeavours that the world may be the better for you. If it be the duty of every christian, much more is it the indispensable duty of a minister of Christ to take heed that no corrupt communication proceed out of his mouth, but that which is good for edification, that it may minister grace to the hearers.†

In your private visits to the members of your flock, or to the houses of those who attend on your ministry, depart not without putting in (if possible) some word for God and religion, for Christ and his gospel: take occasion from common occurrences that arise, artfully and insensibly to introduce some discourse of things sacred. Let it be done with prudence and holy skill, that the company may be led into it ere they are aware. The ingenious Mr. NORRIS's little discourse on religious conversation, and Mr. MATTHEW HENRY's sermon on *Friendly Visits*, have many excellent and valuable hints in them for our use.

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* Matt. x. 16.

† Eph. iv. 23.

It is to be confessed, that the best of ministers and christians sometimes fall into such company, that it is hardly possible to speak a word for God and the gospel among them. Try then whether you cannot lead the discourse to some useful theme in matters of science, art and ingenuity, or to rules of prudence, morality, or human conduct. There is a time of keeping silence, and restraining our lips as with a bridle, even from every thing that is piously good, while some sort of wicked men stand before us.* The best men are sometimes dumb with silence, and dare not speak of God or religion, lest they should cast their pearls before swine, and give their holy things to dogs; and lest they should provoke the unclean or the envious animals to foam out their impurities, or to turn again and rend them. But I doubt this caution has been carried much farther by our own cowardice and carnality of spirit, than David practised it, or than Jesus Christ meant it, in the viith of Matthew. Let us take heed, then, that we abuse not this prudent caution, to a manifest neglect of our duty, and to withhold our lips from the things of God, where providence gives us a fair opportunity to speak of them.

Now and then take occasion to speak a kind and religious word to the children of the household; put them in mind of avoiding some childish folly, or of practising some duty that belongs to their age. Let your memory be well furnished with the words of scripture, suited to the several ages of mankind, as well as to the various occasions of life, that, out of the abundance of the heart, your mouth may speak to the advantage of all that hear you, and particularly to that of the younger parts of mankind, who are the hopes of the next generation. Make the lambs of the flock love you, and hear your voice with delight, that they may grow up under your instruction, to fill up the room of their fathers when they are called away to heaven: nor let servants be utterly neglected, where providence may afford you an opportunity to speak a word to their souls.

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* Ps. xxxix. 1, 2.

He that has the happy talent of parlour-preaching, has sometimes done more for Christ and souls in the space of a few minutes, than by the labour of many hours and days, in the usual course of preaching in the pulpit. Our character should be all of a piece, and we should help forward the success of our public ministrations, by our private addresses to the hearts and consciences of men, where providence favours us with just occasions.

In order to promote this work of particular watchfulness over the flock of Christ, where he has made you a shepherd and overseer, it is useful to keep a catalogue of their names, and now and then review them with a pastoral eye and affection. This will awaken and incline you to lift up proper petitions for each of them, so far as you are acquainted with their circumstances in body or mind. This will excite you to give thanks to God on account of those who walk as becomes the gospel, and who have either begun, or proceeded and increased in the christian life and temper by your ministry: you will observe the names of the negligent and backsliding christians, to mourn over them, and admonish them: you will be put in mind how to dispose of your time in christian visits, and learn the better to fulfil your whole ministry among them.

§ 40. (V.) The things which I have spoken hitherto, have been a display of the best methods I can think of, for the execution of the sacred office of the *ministry;* and so far as they are conformable to the word of God, we may venture to say, these are your *duties*, my dear brother, and these are ours. It remains now to be considered, in what manner shall we ENFORCE them on our own consciences, and on yours? What solemn obtestations shall I use to press these momentous concerns on all our hearts? What pathetic language shall I choose, what words of awful efficacy and divine fervour, which may first melt our spirits into softness, and then imprint these duties upon them with lasting power? We exhort and charge you, we exhort and charge ourselves, by all that is serious and sacred, by all that is important and everlasting, by all the solemn transactions between God and man which are past, and by all the more solemn and awful scenes which are yet to come; by all things in our holy religion which are dreadful and tremendous, and by all things in this gospel, which are glorious and amiable, heavenly and divine. We charge you by all that is written in this book of God, according to which we shall be judged in the last day, by all the infinite and astonishing glories and terrors of an invisible world, and an unseen eternity; we charge and exhort you, we exhort and charge ourselves, that we all take heed to the ministry which we have received of the Lord Jesus, that we fulfil it.

§ 41. We charge you, and we charge ourselves by the decaying interest of religion, and the withering state of christianity at this day, that we do not increase this general and lamentable decay, this growing and dreadful apostacy, by our slothful and careless management of the trust which is committed to us. It is a divine interest indeed, but declining; it is a heavenly cause, but among us it is sinking and dying. O let us stir up our hearts, and all that is within us, and strive mightily in prayer and in preaching to revive the work of God, and beg earnestly that God, by a fresh and abundant effusion of his Spirit, would revive his work among us. Revive thy own work, O Lord, in the midst of these years of sin and degeneracy, nor let us labour in vain. Where is thy zeal, O Lord, and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and thy mercies? Are they restrained? O let us rouse our souls with all holy fervour, to fulfil our ministry, for it will be a dreadful reproach upon us, and a burden too heavy for us to bear, if we let the cause of Christ and godliness die under our hands, for want of a lively zeal, and pious fervour and faithfulness in our ministrations.

§ 42. We entreat, we exhort and charge you, and we charge ourselves, by the solemn and awful circumstances of a dying bed, and the thoughts of conscience in that important hour, when we shall enter into the world of spirits, that we take heed to the ministry which we have received: surely that hour is hastening upon us, when our heads will lie upon a dying pillow. When a few more mornings and evenings have visited our windows, the shadows of a long night will begin to spread themselves over us: in that gloomy hour, conscience will review the behaviour of the days that are past, will take account of the conduct of our whole lives, and will particularly examine our labours and cares in our sacred office. Oh may we ever dread the thoughts of making bitter work for repentance in that hour, and of treasuring up terrors for a death-bed, by a careless and useless ministry!

§ 43. We exhort and charge you, and we charge ourselves, by our gathering together before the throne of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the solemn account we must there give of the ministry with which he hath entrusted us, that we prepare, by our present zeal and labour, to render that most awful scene peaceful to our souls, and the issue of it joyful and happy. Let us look forward to that illustrious and tremendous appearance, when our Lord shall come with ten thousands of his holy angels to inquire into the conduct of men, and particularly of the ministers of his kingdom here on earth. Let us remember that we shall be examined in the light of the flames of that day, what we have done with his gospel which he gave us to preach! What we have done with his promises of rich salvation, which he sent us to offer in his name! What is become of the souls committed to our care! O that we may give up our account with joy, and not with grief, to the Judge of the living and the dead, in that glorious, that dreadful and decisive hour!

§ 44. We charge and warn you, my dear brother, and we warn and charge ourselves, by all the terrors written in this divine book, and by all the indignation and vengeance of God, which we are sent to display before a sinful world; by all the torments and agonies of hell, which we are commissioned to denounce against impenitent sinners, in order to persuade men to turn to God, and receive and obey the gospel, that we take heed to our ministry that we fulfil it. This vengeance and these terrors will fall upon our souls, and that with intolerable weight, with double and immortal anguish, if we have trifled with these terrible solemnities, and made no use of these awful scenes to awaken men to lay hold of the offered grace of the gospel. Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord, let us persuade men, for we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive according to our works.*

§ 45. In the last place, we entreat, we exhort and charge you, by all the joys of paradise, and the blessings of an eternal heaven which are our hope and support under all our labours, and which in the name of Christ, we offer to sinful, perishing men, and invite them to partake thereof. Can we speak of such joys and glories with a sleepy heart and indolent language? Can we invite sinners, who are running headlong into hell, to return and partake of these felicities, and not be excited to the warmest forms of address, and the most lively and engaging methods of persuasion? What scenes of brightness and delight can animate the lips and language of an orator, if the glories and the joys of the christian's heaven and our immortal hopes cannot do it? We charge and entreat you, therefore, and we charge ourselves, by the shining recompenses which are promised to faithful ministers, that we keep this glory ever in view, and awaken our dying zeal in our sacred work.

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* 2 Cor. v. 10, 11.

THE

CHRISTIAN PREACHER, &c.

DISCOURSE VI.

ON THE EVIL AND DANGER OF NEGLECTING SOULS.

§ 1. Introductory Remarks. (i.) The *neglect* of souls is highly criminal. § 2 (ii.) A readiness in men to *excuse* themselves for it. § 3—5. (iii.) These excuses might often be *over-ruled*. § 6. An apology for the author's intended closeness of address. § 7. The subject stated. § 8—10. (I.) What EXCUSES may be offered for neglecting souls. 1. That we do something considerable for that purpose. § 11. 2. That the care of particular persons more properly belongs to others. § 12. 3. That we have much other business. § 13. Recreation. § 14. Studies § 15. Pleasures of literature. § 16. An address to young ministers. § 17. Over-artful composition of sermons. § 18, 19. That our attempts might displease our people · § 20. (II.) The *great* EVIL of that neglect. § 21. 1. The death of the soul. § 22. 2. How many souls die around us. § 23. 3. The divine provision to prevent their death. § 24. 4. The peculiar obligations we are under to endeavour after their preservation. As christians. § 25. As ministers, obliged by the declarations of scripture, and, § 26. Our personal engagement. § 27. (III.) APPLICATION in practical inferences. 1. To humble ourselves deeply, while we remember our faults. § 28. 2. Seriously consider what methods are to be taken for the time to come.

§ 1. "IF thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain: If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not: Doth not he that pondereth the heart, consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?"*

For the explication of these words, I would offer three plain and obvious remarks:

(i.) That the *omission*, which is here charged as so displeasing to God, though immediately referring to men's natural lives, must surely imply that the *neglect of their souls* is much more criminal.

The text strongly implies, that we shall be exposed to guilt and condemnation, before God, by *forbearing to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain.* This must directly refer to innocent persons, brought into visible and extreme danger by some oppressive enemy, either by the sudden assault of a private person, or by some unjust prosecution under forms of law; and may particularly extend to cases, where we have reason to believe a capital sentence has been passed, in consequence of false witness, detected before execution is done.† And if the neglect of that be (as you see it is) represented as highly criminal, it must be a much more heinous crime, by any neglect of ours, to permit the ruin of men's souls, without endeavouring after their recovery, when they are, as it were, drawn away to the extremest danger of eternal death, and are ready to be slain by the sword of divine justice.

§ 2. (ii.) The text seems to suppose that men would be ready to *excuse themselves* for this neglect. It is true indeed, that at the first sight of a miserable object, we naturally find a strong impulse to endeavour to relieve it. Our hearts, as it were, spring in our bosoms, and urge us forward, to exert ourselves on such an occasion; which seems to be intimated by that word, which we render *forbear*, which often signifies to check, restrain, and hold back a person from what he is eager on doing. But the wise man intimates, there may be danger of suppressing these generous sallies of the soul, on the first view of the object; of suffering our charity to cool, and then of searching out apology for our inactivity. You may be ready to say, *Behold we knew it not.* 'I did not particularly see the danger; I did not, however, apprehend it to be so extreme: or, I did not know the innocence of the person in danger; or, if I did believe it, I knew not how to deliver him. I did not think the interposition of such a person as myself could be of any importance in such an affair. I was sorry to see innocence overborne, and weakness oppressed; but I was myself too weak to contend with the mightier oppressor; too poor; too ignorant, or too busy, to meddle in an affair, where those who were much my superiors were concerned, and had determined the case. I had no obligations to the person in danger; I had no concern with him, nor any thing to do to embarrass myself with his affairs."——If these excuses be just, it is well. Nevertheless, the text upposses,

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* Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.

† It was allowed amongst the Jews, that if any person could offer any thing in favour of a prisoner, after sentence was passed, he might be heard before execution was done; and therefore it was usual, (as the *Mischna* says) that when a man was led to execution, a cryer went before him, and proclaimed, 'This man is now going to be executed for such a crime, and such and such are witnesses against him: whoever knows him to be innocent, let him come forth and make it appear.

§ 3. (iii.) That these *excuses* might often be *over-ruled*, by an appeal to men's consciences, as in the sight of God.

Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? As if he should have said 'It is an easy thing to excuse omissions, so that a fellow-creature shall have nothing to reply; but whoever thou art that readest these words, I charge thee to remember, that it is comparatively a very little matter to be judged of man's judgment; he that judgeth thee is the Lord:* And he pondereth the heart: He weighs, in a most accurate balance, all its most secret sentiments. I therefore cut off all chicane and trifling debate at once, by placing thee in his presence, and laying open thy conscience there. Thou canst answer *me;* but canst thou answer the heart-searching *God?* Does not He, the great Father of spirits, see, in every instance, how inferior spirits conduct themselves? Does he not precisely know the situation in which thy heart was, at the very moment in question? Thou sayest thou knewest it not: but he is witness whether thou indeed didst, or didst not know it. And he also sees all the opportunities and advantages which thou hadst for knowing it; all the hints, which might have been traced out, to open a more explicit and particular knowledge; every glimpse which thou hadst when thou wast (like the priest, when he spied at a distance the wounded traveller) passing by on the other side,* and perhaps affecting to look the contrary way.'

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* 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

§ 4. Nor was it in vain, that the wise man renewed his expostulation in a different form. *He that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it?* As if he had said, 'Consider God, as keeping thine own soul; as holding it in life;† as preserving thy spirit, by his continued visitation;‡ and then say, O thou that neglectest the life of thy brother, whether He must not be highly displeased with that neglect? May he not reasonably expect, that while He, the Lord of heaven and earth, condescends to become thy guardian, thou shouldest learn of him, and be, according to thine ability, and in thy sphere, a guardian to the whole human race, and shouldest endeavour, in every instance, to ward off danger from the life, from the soul of thy brother?'

§ 5. And that these thoughts may enter into the mind with all their weight, it is added once more, in this pointed form of interrogation, *Will not He render to every man according to his works?* 'I appeal to thine own heart, Is He not a Being of infinite moral, as well as natural perfections, and will He not, as the judge of all the earth, do right?§ Would He not have remembered and rewarded thy generous care for the preservation of the miserable creature in question? And, on the other hand, will He not reckon with thee for such a failure? Human laws, indeed, cannot punish such neglects; but the Supreme Legislator can, and will do it. Think of these things, and guard against such fatal negligence in every future instance. Think of them, and humble thyself deeply before God, for every past instance in which such guilt has been incurred.'

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* Luke x 31. † Ps. lxvi. 9. ‡ Job x. 12. § Gen. xviii. 25.

§ 6. God is my witness, that I mean not to insinuate the least disrespectful thought, with regard to any one of you. Nevertheless, permit me to say it without offence, (for I say it in the fear of God and with the sincerest deference and friendship to you) I am afraid, the extensive and important obligations of the ministerial office are not generally considered, and remembered among us as they ought. I apprehend much more might be done for the honour of God and the good of souls, than is commonly done, even by those who, in the main, have a principle of true religion in their hearts; by those who keep up the exercise of public worship in a regular and honourable manner, and appear not only irreproachable in their conversation, but, if considered as in private life, bringing forth the fruits of righteousness. The learned, the wise, the virtuous, the pious minister, is, I fear, often negligent of a considerable part of his trust and charge; and thereby fails to *deliver*, as he might, *those that are drawn unto death*, and perhaps are just *ready to be slain*.

§ 7. To awaken our spirits, therefore, from that insensibility, in this respect, into which they are so ready to fall, I shall take the liberty,

I. Briefly to consider, what *excuses* we may be most ready to offer, for neglecting the souls of men.

II. Seriously to represent the *great evil* of that neglect in the sight of God, notwithstanding all those excuses. After which,

III. I shall add a few hints, by way of *reflection*, as the time may admit.

§ 8. (I.) I am to consider, what EXCUSES we may be ready to make, for *neglecting* to do our utmost for the salvation of men's souls.—Particularly,

I. That we *do something considerable* for that purpose:—That we take care for their instruction in public; reading the word of God to them, when they are assembled together in his house; explaining, and enforcing it, in our expositions and sermons; presenting prayers and praises to God, in their name; and, at proper seasons, administering the sacraments, in such a manner as we judge most agreeable to the institution of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so far indeed it is well: and a most wise and gracious appointment of our blessed Redeemer it is, that such ordinances should be administered on solemn, stated days, and by men appropriated to that employment; in consequence of which, such knowledge is dispersed, as is, through the divine blessing, effectual for the salvation of many souls. And I am not afraid to say, that this would make the christian ministry, even in the hands of ignorant, careless and vicious men, a blessing to the nation where it is settled, so long as reading the scriptures, and almost any kind of prayers in an intelligible language, make a part of divine service in their assemblies. Much more then will it be so, in the hands of wise, sober and religious men.

§ 9. But while we are thus pleading our diligence and care in the administration of public ordinances, it will be kindness to ourselves, seriously to ask our own hearts, at least, how they are administered. It is a very important trust, to have the management of men's religious hours committed to us; their seasons of *social* worship being, comparatively, so short, and so infinitely momentous. Methinks, we do almost, as it were, put our own lives in our hand while we undertake it, and may justly tremble on the view of that awful account which we are to give of it.

I hope, sirs, we have the testimony of our own consciences before God, that we do not, on these solemn occasions, content ourselves with cold essays on mere moral subjects, however acute, philosophical, or polite; nor make it our main business, in our sermons, to seek the ornament and elegance of words, the refinements of criticism, or the nice arrangement of various complex and abstruse argumentations. When we speak, in the name and presence of God, to immortal creatures, on the borders of eternity, I hope we entertain our hearers with plain, serious, and lively discourses, on the most important doctrines of christianity; in their due connection, and their relation to each other, in such a manner, as we, on mature consideration, do verily believe may have the most effectual tendency to bring them to God through Christ, and to produce and promote in their hearts, through the divine blessing, the great work of regeneration and holiness. I hope and trust, that God is our witness, and that the people of our charge are witnesses, that not one of those who diligently attend on our ministry, though but for a few succeeding sabbaths, can fail to learn the way of salvation, as exhibited in the gospel; and that we speak of it, as those that are in earnest, and do, from our very souls, desire to answer the great ends of our ministry, in the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the eternal happiness of those invaluable souls whom he has committed to our care. Otherwise we may incur great and fatal guilt, though public worship be constantly and decently carried on, and though a reasonable proportion of time be employed in it, with numerous and attentive auditories; to whom we may be as the lovely song of one that has a pleasant voice;* while in the ears of God, for want of that fervent charity, which should dictate and animate all, we are but as sounding brass, or as a tinkling cymbal.†

§ 10. But granting, as I would willing suppose, and as with relation to you, my brethren, I do firmly believe, all these reflections can be answered with satisfaction: here is indeed a part of your duty honourably performed, and an important part of it too. But is that part, though ever so important, to be substituted for the whole? The diligent inspection of our flock, pastoral visits, the observation of the religious state of families, personal exhortations, admonitions and cautions, by word or letter, as prudence shall direct, catechising children, promoting religious associations among the younger and the elder people of our charge, and the strict and resolute exercise of discipline in the several churches over which we preside; are these no parts of our office? Will we say it with our dying breath, will we maintain it before the tribunal of Christ, that they did not belong to the christian ministry? And if not, will our care in other parts of it be allowed as a sufficient *excuse* before him, for our total *omission* of these? We have preached and prayed, and administered the sacraments. These things we should indeed have done; and when we had taken the care of congregations upon us, we could hardly avoid it; but surely our own consciences will, now or hereafter, tell us, that we ought not to have left the others undone.* But we may perhaps for a while elude the conviction, by pleading,

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* Ezek. xxxiii. 32. † 1 Cor. xiii. 1.

§ 11. 2. That the *care* of *particular persons* more properly belongs to *others;* and especially to heads of families, who have more opportunities of being serviceable to those under their charge, and indeed have the most immediate concern in them.——It certainly does. But does it belong to them *alone?* or if he did, do not they belong to us, and to our care? and is it not the part of every superior officer of a society to see to it, that the subaltern officers be careful and diligent in the discharge of their duty? And in this case, are we to take it for granted, that, in our respective congregations, heads of families are so of course? That they pray in their families; that they read the scriptures and other good books there, especially on the evening of the Lord's day: that they catechise their children, and solemnly press upon them, and upon their servants, the serious care of practical religion? Are we roundly to conclude, without any farther inquiry, that all this is done, and done in so diligent, and so prudent a manner, as that there is no need of any particular exhortations, instructions, or admonitions from *us*? Would to God, there were any one congregation in the whole kingdom, of which this might reasonably be presumed to be the case! But if it were indeed so, would not our concurrence with these wise and pious heads of families, in so good but so difficult a work, encourage and strengthen them to prosecute it with greater cheerfulness and vigour? Would it not quicken both their cares and their endeavours? And might it not, by the divine blessing, promote the success of them? Might it not gain on the minds of children and servants, to see that we do not think it beneath us, tenderly to care for their souls? And might not our tender and condescending regards to them in private, by convincing them how well we mean them, render our public labours more acceptable and useful to them? Now we well know, that the children and servants of the present generation are the hopes of the next; as they are probably those, that in their turns will be parents and governors of families; whose children and servants, when they arise, will one way or another feel the happy or unhappy consequences of our fidelity or neglect? And when such affairs are in question, shall we allow ourselves to plead,

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* Matt. xxiii. 23.

§ 12. 3. That we have so much *other business*, and such various engagements of a different kind, that we cannot possibly attend to these things?

But give me leave, my brethren, to observe, that the question here is not, whether we can find out *other agreeable ways* of filling up our time? but whether those other ways are *more important*, and whether that different manner of employing it be more acceptable in the sight of God, and will turn to a better account in that great day, when our conduct is to be finally reviewed by Him? We must indeed have our seasons of recreation, and our seasons of study: but it will easily appear, that no regards to either of these will vindicate or excuse our neglect of the private duties we owe to our flock, in giving diligence to know their state;* and being careful to teach them, not only publicly, but from house to house.*

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* Prov. xxvii. 23.

§ 13. *Recreation*, to be sure, can afford no just apology for neglecting it; since to follow this employment prudently, might be made a kind of recreation from the labours of a sedentary and studious life. A grave and severe recreation! you will perhaps say. Grave indeed, I will acknowledge it to be; but not therefore to a serious mind less delightful. So much of those two noblest and sweetest exercises of the soul, devotion and benevolence, would naturally mingle with these pious cares and tender addresses, as would renew the strength which had been exhausted in our studious hours, and the manly, shall I say, or rather the God-like joy it would administer, would quite discountenance that which we find in the gay indulgences of a humorous and facetious conversation; though I see no necessity of forbidding that, at proper intervals, so far as its cheerfulness is consistent with wisdom and religion. And I am sure, that if we can turn our seasons of recess from study, to so profitable an account as would be answered by the duties which you know I have now in view, it will be a most happy art, well becoming one who is truly prudent, and would therefore husband his time to the best purposes for eternity; in which view it is evident, that the smallest fragments of it, like the dust of gold, are too valuable to be lost.

§ 14. The great proportion of time to be given to our *studies*, will, no doubt, be urged, as a yet more material excuse. But here it is obvious to reply, that a prudent care in the duties I am now recommending, is very consistent with our employing a great deal of time in study; and particularly, with our giving it, what I hope we shall always learn to value and redeem, our morning hours, to which some of the evening may also be added. And if these will not generally suffice, give me leave to ask, What are those important studies, that would thus ingross the whole of our time, excepting what is given devotion, and to what is generally called *recreation*?

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* Acts xx. 20.

§ 15. I have had some little taste of the pleasures of literature myself, and have some reason to hope I shall not be suspected of any prejudice against it; nor am I at all inclined to pass those contemptuous censures on the various branches of it, in which ignorance and sloth are often, with strange stupidity, or with yet stranger assurance, seeking, and it may be finding a refuge. But on such an occasion I must freely say, that I fear many things, which employ a very large portion of our retired time, are studied rather as polite amusements to our own minds, than as things which seem to have any apparent subserviency to the glory of God, and the edification of our flock; and consequently, I fear, they will stand as *articles of abatement*, if I may so express it, in our final account; and when they come to be made manifest, will be found works that shall be burnt, as being no better, in the divine esteem, "than wood, hay, and stubble,"* how beautifully soever they may have been varnished, or gilded over.

§ 16. Let me here, in particular, address myself to my *younger brethren*, with a frankness, which may be to them more excusable, while I urge them to a *christian self-denial* upon this head, where perhaps it may be, of all others, the most difficult. I do not apprehend persons of your approved character to be in danger of any other kind of luxury and intemperance; but there is, if you will permit me so to call it, a sort of refined, intellectual luxury, with regard to which I am jealous over you, lest you should be seduced into it, or rather, lest some of you be already ensnared by its specious charms.

I would not, my young friends, be so severe and cruel, as to desire you should be confined from that high and elegant entertainment, which a person of genius and taste will find in the masterly writings of the ancient orators, historians and poets; or in those polite and elegant pieces which our own and other modern languages may afford; from which the wise man, and the christian, will learn many things of solid use, as well as matters of most delightful amusement. Neither would I pretend to forbid some mathematical and philosophical researches, into which you are initiated in your academical course, and with which you will do well to retain and improve your acquaintance in the progress of life; both to strengthen your rational faculties by that strenuous exercise, and to improve your knowledge of the works of God; which will appear great, wonderful, and delightful, in proportion to the degree of sagacity and diligence with which they may be searched out.* But it is one thing to *taste* of these poignant and luscious fruits, and another to feed and *live* upon them: one thing to make the most noble and substantial parts of them our *entertainment* and refreshment; and quite another to make their circumstantial curiosities the *chief business* of our study, and the favourite subjects of our most attentive inquiry. That true greatness and elevation of mind, which the gospel is so admirably calculated to produce, would teach us a much sublimer science: and if, for the sake of these little things, we neglect to pray for those whom God hath committed to our care, to inquire into their religious state, to pursue them with suitable applications and addresses, the time will come when we shall assuredly own, that we dearly purchased the most refined pleasures they could possibly give us: not to say how much greater and nobler pleasure we even now resign, while our duty is neglected.

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* 1 Cor. iii. 12, 15.

Oh! my brethren, let us consider how fast we are posting through this dying life which God has assigned us, in which we are to manage concerns of infinite moment; how fast we are passing on to the immediate presence of our Lord, to give up our account to him. You must judge for yourselves; but permit me to say, that, for my own part, I would not, for ten thousand worlds, be that man, who, when God shall ask him at last, how he has employed most of his time, while he continued a minister in his church, and had the care of souls, should be obliged to reply, 'Lord, I have restored many corrupted passages in the ancient classics, and illustrated many which were before obscure; I have cleared up many intricacies in chronology or geography; I have solved many perplexed cases in algebra; I have refined on astronomical calculations; and left behind me many sheets on these curious and difficult subjects, where the figures and characters are ranged with the greatest exactness and truth: and these are the employments in which my life has been worn out, while preparations for the pulpit, or ministrations in it, did not demand my immediate attendance.' Oh, sirs, as for the waters which are drawn from these springs, how sweetly soever they may taste to a curious mind that thirsts for them, or to an ambitious mind which thirsts for the applause they sometimes procure, I fear there is often reason to pour them out before the Lord,* with rivers of penitential tears, as the blood of souls which have been forgotten, while these trifles have been remembered and pursued.

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* Psal. cxi. 2.

§ 17. Nor am I without my fears, that a great deal of studious time is lost in an *over-artful* composition of sermons, and in giving them such polish and ornament, as does not conduce to their usefulness, nor any way balance the labour employed in the work. If we do not diligently watch over our hearts, this will be an incense offered to our own vanity, which will render our sacrifice less acceptable to God, however we and our hearers may be delighted with the perfume. Greater plainness and simplicity of speech might often be more useful to the bulk of our auditory, and perhaps more acceptable too; and, on the whole, it might be at least equally beautiful. For all that are not children in understanding know that there is a natural and manly kind of eloquence, arising from a deep sense of the subject, and an ardent love to the souls of our hearers, which is of all others the most to be desired and esteemed. And though such discourses may be attended with some little inaccuracies, any may want something of the varnish which exacter preparation might set on; yet, surely where a habit of speaking is formed by proper application, and the materials of a sermon are well digested in the mind, it will rise above a reasonable contempt. And if, where more exact preparation is made, a care to preserve those niceties of composition deaden the manner of the delivery, and take off either its solemnity, its vigour, or its tenderness, I cannot but apprehend it as injurious to the character of the *orator* as to that of the *christian*. The most celebrated speakers, in judicial courts and in senates, have in all nations and ages pursued the method I now recommend; and the most acceptable preachers have successfully attempted it. On the whole, permit me to say, it would be a fatal thing to barter away the souls of our people for the highest and justest reputation of speaking well; yet I fear there are many who in this view, do it for nought, and have not, in any sense, increased their wealth by the price.* But perhaps, after all, the most plausible excuse may be that which I have reserved as the last I shall mention, viz.

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* 2 Sam. xxiii. 16, 17.

§ 18. 4. That the attempts I am proposing might *displease* those that attend upon our ministry; upon which account it may seem, both with respect to them and ourselves, a necessary precaution of prudence to decline them. This is the lion in the street,† which we often plead, slothful as we too naturally are, for staying within doors, when our duty calls us abroad on these charitable errands: but I hope, on a nearer approach, it will not be found so fierce, or so invincible, as a timorous imagination paints it.

Methinks, brethren, we make a very unfavourable representation of the temper and character, not to say, of the breeding and understanding of our people, when we so readily take it for granted that they will be displeased with us, for addressing those exhortations to them in private, which they seem so desirous of receiving from us in public. Let us ask our own consciences, would they *all* be displeased? If not, the displeasure it might give to *some*, can be no excuse for neglecting it with regard to *others*. And are we indeed so miserable, as to be situated among whole congregations, in whom ignorance, pride and profaneness prevail to such a degree, that a minister who would be welcome among them, if he came only as a common visitant, should be looked upon with contempt or indignation, when he came expressly as a *friend to their eternal interests*, and would step a little out of the common way for their salvation. If this were really our case, who would not say with the prophet, Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, though it were but such a wretched cave as travellers find in a desert, that I might leave my people, and go from them; for they be all an assembly of treacherous men!* of treacherous men indeed, if, while they call themselves christians and protestants, yea, and profess to separate from their brethren on religious principles, they should think themselves injured and affronted by the exhortations of their ministers, while they would warn every man, and teach every man in all wisdom, that they might present them perfect in Christ.† But blessed be God, bad as the world is, there is no room to imagine this to be the case, or any thing like it. Perhaps, while we are delaying, and coldly deliberating about it, many lively christians under our care are earnestly praying that God may put such a thing into our hearts: and should we attempt it; I doubt not but they would receive us as angels of God, or even as Christ himself;‡ their love to us would be more abundantly confirmed, and their heart cemented in closer bonds than they have yet known. And many others would at least own that we acted in character, and maintained a more apparent consistency of behaviour, if the affair were properly conducted.

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* Psal. xliv. 12. † Prov. xxvi. 13.

Did we indeed pretend to control them in the management of their temporal affairs, or to exercise a lordly dominion over their faith and their conscience, they might justly be displeased: or did we craftily demand that they should lay open to us the secrets of their breasts in confession, their suspicions were pardonable, and their resentments reasonable. But it must be great malice and folly to suspect any design of that infamous nature from our visiting them as pastors, with pious exhortations and affectionate prayers, as those who are concerned for them, and their children, and servants, that their souls may prosper and be in health.* A solicitude for the health of their bodies is esteemed friendship and gratitude, and inquiries concerning it seem but common decency: and can it offend them to find we are solicitous about that welfare which is infinitely more important, and by virtue of our office, our peculiar charge?

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* Jer. ix. 2. † Col. i. 28. ‡ Gal. iv. 14.

§ 19. Yes, you will say, in *one* instance it will displease: for when we are obliged to blame any thing which we see amiss in them, their *pride* will naturally take fire on such an occasion; and perhaps those whom we have thought our best friends will become our enemies, if we will venture to tell them such disagreeable truths† as fidelity may extort in some circumstances. This is, after all, the main difficulty; and, as I cannot wonder if it impress our minds, I pray God to forgive the perverseness of those that make it so great. Yet, surely, it is possible to manage reproof so as that in most instances it shall oblige rather than provoke. If we tell our hearers of their faults privately; and if we do it with tenderness and respect: if we shew by our manner of speaking, that what we say proceeds from an humble fear lest we should displease God, betray our trust, and injure their souls by neglect; if at the same time our behaviour to them be, as it surely should be, constantly obliging: if we do our utmost, so far as truth and justice will permit, to guard and shelter their character in the world; and bring our complaints of them to none but themselves: bad as the world is, I believe few will quarrel with us upon this account; but we shall see, as Solomon observed, that "he who rebuketh a man, will afterwards find more favour than he that flattereth with his tongue."*

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* 3 John 2.

† Gal. iv. 16.

But supposing the worst that can happen, that folly and wickedness should prevail so far over all the tender and prudent address of the friend and the pastor, as to render us evil for so great a good, and hatred for so generous and so self-denying an instance of love, how could that hatred be expressed? Seldom in any more formidable manner than by withdrawing from our ministry, and discontinuing what they have done for our support; for the revilings of persons of such a character can seldom hurt any but themselves. Now I hope, brethren, we shall always retain so much of a manly, not to say a christian spirit, as to choose to retrench some of our expences, to forego some of the entertainments of life, to cast ourselves and families on providence, or even, if it were necessary, to subsist in an honest and creditable poverty by the daily labour of our own hands; much rather than meanly to crouch to such haughty sinners, and sacrifice duty, honour, and conscience, to the arrogance of their petulant temper. Let us fear God as we ought, and we shall find nothing to fear from them; but we should be willing to imitate the fidelity and courage of the baptist, though the wrath of a king might be provoked by it, and imprisonment or martyrdom might be its reward. I hope such considerations as these may effectually obviate the excuses which indolence or cowardice may be ready to form for our neglect of men's souls; especially when we go on,

§ 20. (II.) To consider the GREAT EVIL of that *neglect*, as it appears in the sight of God, notwithstanding all these excuses, or any of the like kind, with which we may endeavour to palliate it.

But who can fully represent it, as it appears to his capacious and all-penetrating view! What human mind can conceive the infinite evil! It is not, sirs, a subject, on which to display the wantonness of wit, or the colourings of artificial harangue; a terrible kind of solemnity attends it, and I attempt the display of it with fear and trembling. If it seems a light matter to us, to *forbear to deliver* those that in this sense are *drawn unto death*, and them that are thus *ready to perish*, consider, my brethren, and Oh, may my own conscience always consider, what the death of the soul is;—how many wretched souls are continually dying around us;—what gracious provision God has made to prevent it;—and what peculiar obligations we are under, to labour to the utmost for the preservation of their lives.

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* Prov. xxviii. 23.

§ 21. 1. Let us think, what the *death of the soul* is.

The apostle James intimates, that it is a thought of great importance, when he says, "He that shall turn a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death."* As if he had said, Do but reflect what that is, and you will find your success is its own reward. We well know that to save a soul from death is not merely to prevent the extinction of its being, though even that were much; but to prevent its positive, its lasting, its eternal misery. It is to prevent its being slain by the pointed and flaming sword of divine justice.

It is a tragical spectacle to behold a criminal dying by human laws, even where the methods of execution are gentle; as, through the lenity of ours, they generally are amongst us: and I doubt not, but it would grieve us to the heart, to see any who had been under our ministerial care in that deplorable circumstance. But Oh, how much more deeply must it pierce our very souls, to see them led forth to that last dreadful execution, with those of whom Christ shall say, "As for these mine enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, bring them forth, and slay them before me!"† Oh, how will it wound us to hear the beginning of those cries and wailings which must never end!

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* James v. 20.

† Luke xix. 27.

How shall we endure the reflections, "These wretches are perishing for ever, in part because I would not take any pains to attempt their salvation!" And is this so strange a supposition, that some, once under our ministry, may then perish in our sight? Would to God, that it were less probable! But, on the contrary, let us

§ 22. 2. Consider, how many *souls*, precious and immortal as they are, seem to be continually *dying* around us.

Are there but few that miscarry? Let Peter inform us, when he says, that "the righteous scarcely are saved."* Yea, let our Lord himself inform us, when he says, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; whereas wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat."† We grieve to see epidemical distempers prevailing around us; we are ready, as Providence calls us, to visit the sick and the dying; and could take little pleasure in our health, if we did not endeavour to succour them, as we have opportunity. But let us look round and see whether that distemper which threatens the *death of souls* be not epidemical indeed. With all the allowances which that charity can make which believeth all things, and hopeth all things,‡ which it can with any shadow of reason hope and believe; must we not own that there are marks of eternal death on many? and that there are many more in whom we can see nothing which looks like a token of spiritual life? So that the best we can say of them is, that possibly there may be some latent sparks of it concealed in the heart, which as yet produce no effect to the honour of their profession, or the benefit of the world. In the mean time, sinners are spreading the infection of their infidelity and their vices far and wide; as if, like some illustrious wretches that have been miscalled heroes, they accounted the destruction of numbers their glory. Can we behold such a contagion spreading itself even in the christian church, which ought to be healthful as the regions of paradise, and not bitterly lament it before God? Or can we seriously lament it, and not endeavour its redress? Especially when we consider,

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* 1 Pet. iv. 18. † Matt. vii. 13, 14. ‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

§ 23. 3. What gracious *provision* God hath made to *prevent* their death. "Is there not indeed Balm in Gilead? Is there not a Physician there?* even this glorious gospel of the blessed God, whose efficacy we have so often heard of, and seen? And shall they yet perish? Adored be the riches of divine grace, we know (and it is infinitely the most important part of all our knowledge) that there is a rich and free pardon proclaimed to all that will sue for it, and accept the benefit in a proper, that is, a grateful manner; for cordial acceptance and real gratitude are all its demands. One would expect the tiding should be as life to the dead: but we see how coldly they are received; how shamefully they are slighted; how generally, yea, how obstinately they are rejected. And what is the consequence? Refusing to believe on the Son of God, they shall "not see life, but the wrath of God abiding on them,"† with an additional weight of vengeance, as it well may. Now is not this enough to make our very hearts bleed, to think that immortal souls should die under the gospel; yea, die under aggravated guilt and ruin? So that instead of being any thing the better for this delightful message of peace and grace, they should be for ever the worse for it; and have reason to wish, throughout all eternity, they had never seen the faces, nor heard the voices of those that brought it, but had been numbered among the sinners of Tyre and Sidon, of Sodom and Gomorrah."‡

If we do not, on the express authority of our Lord, believe this to be the case with regard to impenitent sinners under the gospel, we are not christians even of the lowest class. But if we do believe it, and are not affected with it so far as to endeavour their recovery, I see not how any regard to our own temporal interest, or that of others, can entitle us to the character, either of prudence or humanity; even though we had not been distinguished by a public office in the church, but had passed through life in the station of the obscurest among our hearers. But it is impossible I should do justice to my argument, if I do not urge,

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* Jer. viii. 22. † John iii. 36. ‡ Matt. x. 15. xi. 22.

§ 24. 4. The consideration of the *peculiar obligations* we are under to endeavour the preservation of souls, not only in virtue of our experience as *christians*, but of our office as *ministers*.

If we were only to consider our experiences as we are *christians*, if we have any thing more than the empty name, that consideration might certainly afford us a very tender argument to awaken our compassion to the souls of others. We know what it is ourselves to be upon the brink of destruction and in that sad circumstance to obtain mercy; and shall we not extend mercy to others? We have looked to Jesus, that we might live; and shall we not point him out to them? We have tasted that the Lord is gracious; and shall we not desire to communicate the same happy relish of his grace to all about us? He has magnified the riches of his pardoning love to us; and shall we not, with David, resolve that we will endeavour to *teach transgressors his ways*, and labour to promote the conversion of sinners unto him?* Even now he is keeping our souls, his visitation preserves our spirits;† and, as it is by his grace that we are what we are,‡ it is by having obtained help from him that we continue unto this day:§ and shall his grace daily bestowed upon us be in vain? shall not we have compassion on our fellow servants, as the Lord continually hath pity on us?||

§ 25. But our office as *ministers* completes the obligation, when we consider the view in which the *word of God* represents that office, and the view in which *we ourselves* have received it.

As for the former of these, we are all acquainted with those representations; and it is greatly to be wished, for our own sake and that of our people, they may be very familiar to our minds. Let us often listen with becoming attention to the blessed God as speaking to us in those words which he once addressed to the prophet Ezekiel, that faithful, approved servant of the Lord; "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me: When I say to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his evil ways to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand."* And with apparent reason may the sentinel be punished for the desolation which the enemy makes, while, instead of watching, he sleeps.

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* Ps. li. 13.
† Job x. 12.
‡ 1 Cor. xv. 10.
§ Acts xxvi. 22.
|| Matt. xviii. 33

We are elsewhere represented as men of God,† as soldiers of Jesus Christ,‡ as made overseers or bishops by the Holy Ghost,§ as under-shepherds in subordination to Christ, the great shepherd and bishop of souls:|| and should not the thought, gentle as it is, awaken us to diligent inspection over the sheep he has committed to our care? Otherwise we are but *images* of shepherds; as it is represented in those lively and awful words of God, by Zechariah,¶ which methinks might strike terror and trembling into many, who in the eye of the world may seem the happiest of their brethren: "Woe to the *Idol Shepherd*, that leaveth the flock." *The sword* of divine vengeance, which by his negligence he has justly incurred, *shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye;* upon that *eye* which should have watched over the flock, and that *arm* which should have been stretched out for its rescue; so that he shall be deprived of those capacities he abused, and be made miserable in proportion to that abuse; for *his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.* Such we know are the pathetic views which the scripture gives us of our office, and of the guilt and danger attending the neglect.

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* Ezek. iii. 17, 18.

† Tim. vi. 11.

‡ 2 Tim. ii. 3.

§ Acts xx. 28.

|| 1 Pet. ii. 25.

¶ Zech. xi. 17.

§ 26. I might, if my time would admit, farther urge the views with which we have *ourselves received it*, and *engaged* in it. Most of us, when we undertook the pastoral charge, solemnly recorded our vows before God; 'that we would endeavour, with all diligence and zeal, to attend to the services of this holy function; that we would be instant in season and out of season,* and labour to discharge the private, as well as public duties of the ministerial life. These vows of God are upon us; and every ordination of any of our brethren at which we assist, adds a farther and solemn obligation to them. Let us therefore take the greatest care that we do not *deal deceitfully* and *unfaithfully* both with God and man. For it is most evident, that though the neglect of immortal souls is very criminal in every rational creature, it is most of all so in us who have so deliberately and so publicly undertaken the charge of them.

It would indeed, in this case, not only be cruelty to them, but the basest treachery and ingratitude to our great Lord, who has lodged such a trust in our hands; a trust, which evidently lies so near his heart. Having redeemed his people with his own blood,† he commits them to our care; and having acquired to himself the most tender claim to our love that can be imagined, he graciously requires this evidence of it, that we should *feed his sheep*, yea, his *lambs;*‡ so putting our office in the most amiable and tender view, and bringing in every sentiment of grateful friendship to excite our diligence in it. However *we* may regard it, I doubt not but our blessed Redeemer considers it as the greatest favour, and the highest honour he could have conferred upon us; that, being returned to his throne in the heavens, he should choose us to negociate his cause and interest on earth, and should consign over to our immediate care that gospel he brought down from heaven, and those souls which he died to save; and that he should make it the delightful labour of our life to follow him in his own profession and employment, to be, of all our fellow-creatures, his most immediate representatives, and in humble subordination to him, saviours of men. Does not the very mention of it cause our hearts to glow with a fervent desire and generous ambition of answering so high a confidence? Could any one of us endure the thought of betraying it?

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* 2 Tim. iv. 2. † Acts xx. 28. ‡ John xxi. 15, 16.

How could we, in that case, lift up our faces before him, when we shall, as we certainly must, see him eye to eye.* Yes, my brethren, let us every hour recollect it; our Master will ere long come and reckon with us:† He will *render to every man according to his works*, as my text expresses it in exact harmony with the language of the New Testament.‡ And which of us would not then wish to appear before him, as those that have been *faithfully attached* to his cause, and have *distinguished* themselves by a zeal for his service? Shall we then, any of us, repent of our activity in so good a work? Shall we wish that we had given more of our time to the pursuit of *secular* interest, or the *curiosities* of literature, and less to the immediate *care of souls?* Oh, my brethren, let us be wise in time. We have but one life to spend on earth; and that a very short one too: let us make the best of it; and lay it out in such kind of employments as we verily believe will give us most satisfaction in the closing moments of it, and when eternity is opening upon us. It is easy to form plausible excuses for such a conduct: but our own hearts and consciences would answer us, if we would seriously ask them, what the course of life in the ministerial office is which will then afford the most comfortable review, and through the riches of divine grace, the most pleasing prospect.—I should now proceed,

§ 27. (III.) To the farther APPLICATION of these things, in some *practical inferences* from them:

1. You have all, I doubt not, prevented me in reflecting on the reason we have to *humble ourselves deeply* in the presence of the blessed God, while we

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* Isa. lii. 8. † Matt. xxv. 19.

‡ Matt. xvi. 17. Rom. ii. 6. Rev. xxii. 12.

remember our faults this day.* I do not indeed at all question, but that many of us have set before our people life and death;† and have in our public addresses urged their return to God, by the various considerations of terror and of love, which the thunders of mount Sinai, and the grace of mount Zion have taught us. We have on great occasions visited them, and entered into some serious discourse with them; and have often, and I would hope more or less daily, borne them on our hearts before God in our seasons of devout retirement. Blessed be God that in these instances we have, in any degree, approved ourselves faithful! It must give us pleasure in the review. But, Oh, why have not our prayers been more frequently presented, and more importunately enforced? Why have we not been more serious and more pressing in our private addresses to them, and more attentive in our contrivances, if I may so express it, to catch them ‡ in the net of the gospel? Let us ask our own consciences this day, as in the presence of God, if there be not reason to apprehend that some who were once our hearers, and it may be our dear friends too, have perished through our neglect; and are gone to eternal destruction for want of our more prudent, more affectionate, and more zealous care for their deliverance? In these instances, my brethren, though it is dreadful to say it, and to think it, yet it is most certain that we have been, in part, accessary to their ruin; and have reason to say, with trembling hearts, and with weeping eyes, Deliver us from blood-guiltness, from the blood of these unhappy souls, Oh, God, thou God of our salvation! § And we have need, with all possible earnestness, to renew our application to the blood and righteousness of a Redeemer; not daring to mention any services of our own as matter of confidence in his presence; how highly soever others may have esteemed them, who candidly look on the little we do, and perhaps make more charitable excuses for our neglect, than we ourselves can dare to urge before God. Let the remembrance of these things be for a lamentation: and while it is so,

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* Gen. xli. 9.

† Deut. xxx. 15.

‡ Luke v. 10.

§ Ps. li. 14.

§ 28. 2. Let us seriously consider *what methods* are to be taken to prevent such things for the time to come.*

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* On June the 30th, 1741, a meeting of ministers had been held at *Denton, Huntingdonshire,* and after that a private conference, in which Dr. DODDRIDGE presented hints of a scheme for the *Revival of Religion;* and which was approved not only at the *Denton* conference, but also by some of the most eminent of the London ministers, of different denominations, and at a meeting of ministers which was held at *Northampton* the August following. Then it was agreed to take them into a more particular consideration in a conference at the next assembly, to be held at *Kettering,* the 13th of October. To that conference this discourse was introductory. The result was, that the scheme was approved, with a few other particulars which had not before occurred, and measures were taken to carry them into execution; and as they were printed originally with the discourse in the form of *Resolutions,* we subjoin them here:

I. That it may tend to the advancement of religion, that the ministers of this association, if they have not already done it, should agree to preach one Lord's day on *family religion,* and another on *secret prayer;* and that the time should be *fixed,* in humble hope that concurrent labours, connected with concurrent petitions to the throne of grace, may produce some happy effect.

II. That it is proper, that *pastoral visiting* should be more solemnly attended to; and that greater care should be taken in *personal* inspection than has generally been used. And, that it may conduce to this good end, that each minister should take an exact survey of his flock, and note down the names of the heads of families, the children, the servants, and other single persons in his auditory, in order to keep proper memorandums concerning each; that he may judge the better of the particulars of his duty with regard to every one, and may observe how his visits, exhortations, and admonitions, correspond to their respective characters and circumstances.

III. That consequent on this survey it will be proper, as soon as possible, and henceforward at least once a year, to VISIT, if it be practicable, every head of a family under our ministerial care, with a solemn charge to attend to the business of religion in their hearts and houses, watching over their domestics in the fear of the Lord, we, at the same time, professing our readiness to give them all proper assistances for this purpose.

IV. That it will be highly expedient, immediately, or as soon as may be, to set up the work of CATECHISING in one form or an-

They that have *perished* have perished *for ever*, and are far beyond the reach of our labours and our prayers.

other, and to keep to it statedly for *one half of the year* at least: and that it is probable, future counsels may *ripen some scheme for carrying on this work* in a manner which may tend greatly to the propagation of real, vital, catholic christianity, in the rising generation.

V. That there is reason to apprehend, there are in all our congregations some pious and valuable persons, who live in a *culpable neglect* of the *Lord's supper;* and that it is our duty, particularly to inform ourselvs who they are, and to endeavour by our prayers to God, and our serious addresses to them, to introduce them into communion; (to which, I question not we shall all willingly add) cautiously guarding against any thing in the *methods of admission*, which may justly discourage sincere christians of a tender and timorous temper.

VI. That it is to be feared, there are some, in several of our communions at least, who behave in such a manner as to give *just offence;* and that we may be in great danger of making ourselves "partakers of other men's sins," if we do not animadvert upon them: and that, if they will not reform, or if the crime be notorious, we ought, in duty to God, and to them, and to all around us, solemnly to *cut them off* from our sacramental communion, as a reproach to the church of Christ.

VII. That it may, on many accounts, be proper to advise our people to enter into *little bands*, or *societies*, for religious discourse and prayer; each consisting of six or eight, to meet for these good purposes once in a week or a fortnight, as may best suit with their other engagements and affairs.

VIII. That it might be advisable, if it can be done, to *select* out of each congregation under our care a small number of persons remarkable for experienced prudence, seriousness, humility, and zeal, to act as a stated council for promoting religion in the said society: and that it would be proper, they should have some certain times of meeting with each other and with the minister, to join their counsels and their prayers for the public good.

IX. That so far as we can judge, it might by the divine blessing conduce to the advancement of these valuable ends, that neighbouring ministers, in one part of our land and another, (especially in this county) should enter into *associations* to strengthen the hands of each other by united consultations and prayer: and that *meetings of ministers* might, by some obvious regulations, be made more extensively useful than they often are. In which view it was farther proposed, (with unanimous appropation) That these meetings should be held at certain periodical times: That *each member* of the association should endeavour, if possible, to be present, studying to order his affairs so as to guard against unnecessary hindrances: That public worship should *begin and end sooner*, than it commonly has done on these occasions:—That each pastor preach

But multitudes to this day surround us, who stand exposed to the same danger, and on the very brink of the same ruin. And besides these dying sinners, who are the most compassionable objects which the eye of man or of God beholds on this earth of ours, how many languishing christians demand our assistance? or, if they do not expressly demand it, appear so much the more to need it? Let us look round, my brethren, I will not say upon the nation in general, but on the churches under our immediate care; and say, whether the face of them is such as becomes the societies of those, whom the Son of God has redeemed with his own blood; and

at these assemblies *in his turn*:—That the minister of the place determine who shall be employed in prayer:—That after a moderate repast, to be managed with as little trouble and expence as may be, an hour or two in the afternoon be spent in religious *conference* and *prayer*, and in taking into consideration (merely as a friendly council, and without the least pretence to any right of authoritative decision) the concerns of any brother, or any society, which may be brought before us for our advice:—And finally, that every member of this association shall consider it as an additional obligation upon him, to endeavour to be, so far as he justly and honourably can, a friend and guardian to the reputation, comfort, and usefulness of all his brethren.

X. That it may be proper to enter into some farther measures, to *regulate the admission* of young persons into the *ministry*.—I will take leave to add one particular more, which has since occurred to my thoughts, and which I here submit to your consideration, and to that of my other Reverend Brethren, into whose hands they may fall, especially those of our own association, viz.

XI. Whether something might not be done, in most of our congregations, towards assisting in the *propagation of Christianity abroad*, and spreading it in some of the *darker parts of our own land?* In pursuance of which it is further proposed, that we endeavour to engage as many pious people of our respective congregations as we can, to enter themselves into a *society*, in which the members may engage themselves to some peculiar cares, assemblies, and contributions, with a regard to this great end. A copy of such an association I am endeavouring to introduce among my own people, and several have already signed. It is a feeble essay; and the effects of it in one congregation can be but very small: But if it were generally to be followed, who can tell what a harvest such a little grain might at length produce? May God multiply it a thousand fold!

P. DODDRIDGE.

Northampton, Feb. 1, 1741-2.

of those that call themselves the disciples and members of a once crucified and now glorified Jesus? Is their whole temper and conduct formed upon the model of his gospel. Are they such, as we would desire to present them before the presence of his glory? *What is wanting cannot be numbered;* and perhaps we may be ready, too rashly to conclude that *what is crooked cannot be made straight.* Nevertheless, let us remember, it is our duty to *attempt* it, as prudently, as immediately, and as resolutely as we can. Many admirable advices for that purpose our fathers and brethren have given us; particularly Dr. Watts, in the first part of his *Humble Attempt for the Revival of Religion,** and Mr. Some in his sermon on the same subject: excellent treatises, which, reduced into practice, would soon produce the noblest effects.

That those important instructions may be revived, and accommodated to present circumstances, with such additions as those circumstances require, we are this day, having united our prayers, to unite our counsels. I will not anticipate what I have to offer to your consideration in the more private conference, on which we are quickly to enter. To form proper measures will be comparatively easy; to carry them strenuously into execution, will be the greatest exercise of our wisdom and piety. May proportionable grace be given to animate us, and to dispose them that are committed to our care to fall in with us, in all our attempts for the honour of God, and for their edification and comfort!

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* The Vth Disc. in this Volume.

THE

CHRISTIAN PREACHER, &c.

DISCOURSE VII.

ON THE COMPOSITION OF A SERMON.

§ 1. On the CHOICE of texts; as to completeness of sense, and quantity of matter; as referring to certain times, or to places and auditories. § 2. GENERAL RULES of sermons. § 3. The great importance of avoiding *excess*; and § 4. Of abstaining from observations foreign from theology. § 5. On finding the CONNECTION between the text and context. § 6. Of DIVISION in general. In what cases the division of a *discourse* is proper. § 7. Of dividing the *text*. § 8. Of rendering a division more agreeable, and of subdivisions. § 9. Of observing well the nature of a text, and the consequent manner of composing; whether by explication, or observation. § 10. (I.) Of texts to be discussed by way of EXPLICATION. Of the explication of terms; and § 11. Things. § 12. Two sorts of explication; that of mere proposal, and that of proof or confirmation. § 13. Of simple terms. § 14. Concerning expressions peculiar to scripture; and § 15. Syncategorematica. § 16. How to explain a text, when the matter to be explained consists of a proposition. § 17. (II.) Of texts to be discussed by way of OBSERVATION. Some general directions. § 18. Some SOURCES of invention and observations. Genius and species, characters of virtue or vice, relation and supposition. § 19. Cautions in treating supposed truths. § 20. Person and state, time and place. § 21. Persons addressed, and their particular state; principles and consequences. § 22. The end proposed, and the manner, similarity, differences, and contrast. § 23. The causes, the good and bad in expressions and actions; supposition and prevention. § 24. Consider characters, of majesty, meanness, &c. § 25. Remark degrees, and different interests; distinguish, define, and divide; and compare the different parts of the text together. § 26. (III.) Of texts to be discussed. by way of CONTINUED APPLICATION. § 27. (IV.) Of texts to be discussed in PROPOSITIONS. § 28. These four ways may be sometimes mixed. § 29. Of the EXORDIUM. Its design. Partly to promote suitable affections and attention; but, § 30. Principally, to prepare and conduct the mind to the subject. § 31. On the qualities of an exordium. § 32. On the vices of exordiums. § 33. The best sources. § 34. Of the CONCLUSION.

§ 1. WE can properly reckon only *three* parts of a sermon, *exordium*, *discussion*, and *application;* we will, however, just take notice of *connection* and *division*, after we have spoken a little on the CHOICE of texts,[*] and on a few GENERAL RULES of discussing them. We begin with the former of these.

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[*] The present custom of reading a *text* of scripture, to serve for the ground of a discourse, is derived from the time of EZRA. Before that time the prophets, and before them the patriarchs, delivered in public assemblies sometimes prophecies, and sometimes moral instructions for the edification of the people. We are told that EZRA, accompanied by several Levites, in a public congregation of men and women, ascended a pulpit, opened the book of the law, (the people all rising from their seats on his opening the book) addressed a prayer to God, to which the people said, *Amen*, and *read in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading*, *Neh.* viii. 6—8. In later times, *Moses* was thus *read in the synagogues every sabbath-day*, *Acts* xv. 21.

To this laudable custom our *Saviour* conformed; and, in the synagogue at Nazareth, read a passage in Isaiah, closed the book after he had read it, returned it to the minister, sat down, and preached from the text, *Luke* iv. 16, &c. The apostles followed

1. Never choose such texts as have not a *complete sense;* and even the complete sense of the *writer;* for it is *his* language, and they are *his* sentiments which you explain.

2. When the complete sense of the sacred writer is taken, you may stop; for there are few texts in scripture, which do not afford matter sufficient for a sermon; and it is equally inconvenient to take too much text, or too little; both *extremes* must be avoided.

When *too little* text is taken, you must digress from the subject, in order to find something to say. When *too much* text is taken, either many important considerations which belong to the passage must be left out, or a tedious prolixity must follow.

3. Regard must be paid to *circumstances*, and texts must be chosen relative to them.

1st. In regard to *times:* which are of two sorts, *ordinary*, which every year return at the same seasons; or *extraordinary*, which fall out by providential *occasions.*

Of the *first* kind are Lord's supper days; or days which are solemnized amongst us, as Christmas-day, Easter, Whitsuntide, &c. On these days particular texts should be chosen, which suit the service of the day; for it would discover great negligence to take texts on such days which have no relation to them. It is not to be questioned but on these days peculiar efforts ought to be made, because then the hearers come with raised expectations, which, if not satisfied, turn into contempt and a kind of indignation against the preacher.

Of the *second* kind, particular days not fixed but *occasional*, are fast days, ordination days, &c. on which particular texts must be expressly chosen for the purpose. But on other extraordinary occasions, as most texts may be used to comfort, exhort, or censure, ex-

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his example, *Acts* xviii 4. the primitive fathers theirs, and the custom prevails over all the Christian world at this day.

ROBINSON.

This practice, however, was interrupted in the dark times of popery; and the *Ethics of Aristotle* were read in many churches on Sundays, instead of the Holy Scriptures, as *Melancthon* and others testify. See BAYLE, in *Aristot.* Note U.

cept the subject in hand be extremely important, the safest way is not to change the *usual text*.*

2dly. I add one word touching sermons in *strange* places. Do not choose a text which appears *odd*, or the choice of which vanity may be supposed to dictate; nor a text of *censure;* for a stranger has no business to censure a congregation which he does not inspect, unless he have a *particular call* to it. In such a case, the censure must be conducted with wisdom, and tempered with sweetness. Nor choose a text leading to curious *knotty questions;* then it would be said, The man meant to preach himself. But choose a text of ordinary doctrine, in discussing which, doctrine and morality may be mixed; and rather let moral things be said by way of exhortation and consolation, than by way of censure. Not that the vicious should not be censured; for reproof is *essential* to preaching: but it must be given soberly, and in *general* terms, when we are not with our own flocks.†

§ 2. As to GENERAL RULES of sermons, although the following are well *known*, they are too little *practised;* they ought, however, to be constantly regarded.

1. A sermon should *clearly explain* a text, make the sense easy to be comprehended, and place things before the people's eyes, so that they may be understood without difficulty. It ought to be remembered, that the greatest part of the hearers are simple people, whose profit, however, must be aimed at in preaching; but it is impossible to edify them, unless you be very

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* Such a text, probably, our author means by the phrase, *texte accoutumé,* as would come in course in a precomposed *set of sermons.* Rob.

† Mr. Claude does not mention *funeral* sermons, which, with us, are sometimes just occasion of offence; but which might be well improved to the advantage of the living, if properly managed. It was the opinion of Vossius, that praying to saints owed its origin partly to the injudicious use of figurative language in funeral orations; to the apostrophes, and prosopopeias of the panegyrists. These abuses have driven some good men to lay aside all funeral services whatever; but with much more reason may we retain and improve them to the benefit of the living. Rob.

clear. As to learned hearers, it is certain, they will always prefer a clear before an obscure sermon. Besides, they will consider the simple; nor will their benevolence be content, if the illiterate be not edified.*

2. A sermon must give the *entire sense of the whole* text, in order to which it must be considered in every view. This rule condemns dry and barren explications, wherein the preacher discovers neither study nor invention, and leaves unsaid a great number of beautiful things, with which his text would have furnished him. Discourses of this kind are extremely disgusting. I do not mean that a preacher should always use his utmost efforts, nor that he should always preach alike well, for that neither can nor ought to be. There are extraordinary occasions, for which all his vigour must be reserved. But I mean, that, in ordinary and usual sermons, a kind of *plenitude* should satisfy and content the hearers. The preacher must not always labour to carry the people beyond themselves, nor to ravish them into ecstacies; but he must always satisfy them, and maintain in them an esteem and an eagerness for practical piety.†

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* Every discourse which wants an *interpreter* is a very bad one. The supreme perfection of a preacher's style should be to please the unlearned, as well as the learned, by exhibiting an abundance of beauties for the latter, and being very perspicuous to the former. ROLLIN's *Bell. Lett.*

A preacher is to fancy himself in the room of the most unlearned man in the whole parish, and must therefore put such parts of his discourses, as he would have all understand, in so plain a form of words, that it may not be beyond the meanest of them. BURNET's *Past. Care.*

Μαλιϛα σαφη χρη την λεξιν ειναι. DEMET. PHAL. *De Eloc.*

Oratio cujus summa virtus est perspicuitas, quam sit vitiosa si egeat interprete? QUINT. *Instit.* lib. i. cap. 4.

† The *interest* which we have in what is spoken, alone, can render us attentive. All the truths which the speaker declares, if we cannot personally apply them, are only heard with disgustful weariness; and we sigh for the close of a discourse wherein we have no concern, and which is not even addressed to us.—Editor of MASSILON's Sermons.

Perhaps this is the sole reason of that almost universal dissatisfaction under sermons which appears in so many places. Whatever is not suited to my condition has a *coldness* and *poverty*, in regard to me. ROB.

3. The preacher must be *wise*, *sober*, *chaste*. I say *wise*, in opposition to those impertinent people, who utter jests, comical comparisons, quirks and extravagancies.*

I say *sober*, in opposition to those rash spirits, who would penetrate all, and curiously dive into mysteries beyond the bounds of modesty. Such are those, who make no difficulty of delivering in the pulpit all the speculations of the schools; who fill their sermons with the different interpretations of a term, or the different opinions of interpreters on any passage of scripture; who load their hearers with tedious recitals of ancient history; or an account of the divers heresies which have troubled the church in any matter; all these are contrary to the sobriety of which we speak, and which is one of the most excellent pulpit virtues.

I say farther, *chaste*, in opposition to those bold and impudent geniuses, who are not ashamed of saying many things which produce unclean ideas in the mind. Chastity should weigh the expressions, and make a judicious choice, in order to keep the hearers' minds at the greatest distance from all sorts of carnal and terrestrial ideas.

The likeliest way of succeeding in these cases is to beware of pressing metaphorical terms too far; to adhere to general considerations; and, if possible, to explain the metaphorical terms in few words; and, afterwards, to cleave entirely to the thing itself. †

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* Such things have a very bad effect, as they destroy the gravity of sacred things in the same proportion in which they sanctify the levity of profane ones: yet, let us not imagine that every kind of smartness in preaching is to be avoided. See Quint. lib. vi. *De Risu*.

Μητε γελωτα προπετη στεργε, μητε λογον μετα θρασους αποδεχου, το μεν γαρ ανοητον, το δε μανικον. Neque *petulantem* risum ama, neque *audacem* orationem proba, nam alterum stultitiæ est, alterum insaniæ. Isocrat. *Orat.* ad *Demon.*

† Let us exemplify this observation from Mr. Saurin. The subject is *regeneration*, the text John iii. 1—5. He observes, that the term is a *trope*, and must, *First*, be *restrained;* because it is impossible to understand a metaphor if we do not divest it of every thing foreign from the subject in question. *Secondly*, it must

4. A preacher must be *simple* and *grave*. *Simple*, speaking things full of good natural sense, without metaphysical speculations; for none are more impertinent than they who deliver in the pulpit abstract speculations, definitions in form, and scholastic questions, which they pretend to derive from their texts.

To simple I add *grave*, because all sorts of mean thoughts and expressions, all sorts of vulgar and proverbial sayings, ought to be avoided. The pulpit is the seat of good natural sense; and the good sense of good men. On the one hand then you are not to philosophize too much, and refine your subject out of sight; nor, on the other, to abase yourself to the language and thoughts of the dregs of the people.*

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be *justified;* for the change spoken of under the emblem of a new birth, though expressed in figurative language, is yet a *real change*. *Thirdly*, the idea that a *new birth* gives of this change is so perfect, that it might terrify timorous christians; it must therefore be *qualified*. *Fourthly*, the qualifications of which the subject is capable, are apt to lull some into security, who, under pretence of infirmities, inseparable from the best of men, allow themselves in vices incompatible with a state of grace: this expression therefore must be *guarded*. SAURIN. *Serm. Tom.* vii.

* Rejice degenerem turbam *nil lucis* habentem,
Indecoresque notas, ne sit non digna suppellex.
VIDÆ *Ars Poet.* Lib. iii. 183.

Yet, in compassion to 'the dregs of the people,' who with all their ignorance have souls, it ought to be remembered, that their minds are accessible only by their own way of thinking and speaking; and theirs is a different language, and a different habit of thinking from others in more cultivated life. ROB.

Hence Aristotle wisely says: *Το δε πρεπον εξει η λεξις, εαν η παθητικη, τε και ηθικη, και τοις υποκειμενοις πραγμασιν αναλογον.—Ηθικη δε αυτη η εκ των σημειων δειξις, οτι ακολουθει η αρμοττουσα εκαστω γενει και εξει.—Εξεις δε, καθ᾽ ας ποιος τις τω βιω.—Ου γαρ ταυτα, ουθ᾽ ωσαυτως αγροικος αν και πεπαιδευμενος ειπειε.*—ARISTOT. *Rhet.* Lib. iii. cap. 7.

Optimi ad vulgus hi sunt concionatores, qui *pueriliter, populariter*, et *simplissime* docent. *Mart. Luth.* MELCH. ADAM, *in Vita Lutheri.*

Mr. *Adams* inserts some of *Luther's homely country rhymes*, for which perhaps the author may receive a greater reward at the last day than he would for whole shelves of Greek and Latin folios. ROB.

5. The understanding must be informed, but in a manner, however, which *affects the heart;** either to comfort the hearers, or to excite them to acts of piety, repentance, or holiness. There are two ways of doing this: one formal, in turning the subject to moral uses, and so applying it to the hearers; the other in the simple choice of the things spoken. If they be good, solid, evangelical and edifying of themselves, even should no application be formally made, the auditors would make it themselves; because subjects of this kind are of such a nature, that they cannot enter the understanding without penetrating the heart.

§ 3. One of the most important precepts for the discussion of a text, and the composition of a sermon, is, above all things, to avoid excess: *Ne quid nimis.*

1. There must not be too much *genius;* I mean, not too many brilliant, sparkling, and striking things, for they would produce very bad effects. It would destroy the principal end of preaching, which is to sanctify the conscience; for when the mind is overloaded with too many agreeable ideas, it has not leisure to reflect on the objects, and without reflection the heart is unaffected. Moreover, ideas which divert the mind are not very proper to move the conscience, they flatter the imagination, and that is all.†

2. A sermon must not be *overcharged with doctrine,* because the hearers' memories cannot retain it all, and

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* Docente te in ecclesia non *clamor* populi fed *gemitus* suscitetur; lachrymæ auditorum laudes tuæ sint. Jerom. ad *Nepot.*

Optimus; enim *orator* qui dicendo animos audientium et *docet,* et *delectat,* et *permovet.* Docere debitumest, delectare honorarium, permovere necessarium. Cicero *de Orat.*

† The proper office of the *judgement* in composition, is to compare the ideas which imagination collects: to observe their agreement or disagreement, their relations and resemblances; to point out such as are of a homogeneous nature; to mark and reject such as are discordant; and finally to determine the *truth* and *utility* of the inventions or discoveries which are produced by the powers of imagination. Thus it appears to be in every respect a proper counterbalance to the *rambling* and *volatile* power of the *imagination.*—*Essay on Genius.* B. I. § 1.

by aiming to keep all, they will lose all; and because you will be obliged either to be excessively tedious, or to propose the doctrine in a dry, barren, scholastic manner, which will deprive it of all its beauty and efficacy. Take care then not to charge your sermon with too much matter.*

3. Care must also be taken never to *strain any particular part*, either in attempting to exhaust it, or to penetrate too far into it. If you aim at exhausting a subject, you will be obliged to heap up a number of common things without choice or discernment; if, at penetrating, you cannot avoid falling into many curious questions, and unedifying subtilties; and frequently in attempting it you will distil the subject till it evaporates.

4. *Figures* must not be overstrained. This is done by stretching metaphor into allegory, or by carrying a parallel *too far*.† A metaphor is changed into an allegory, when a number of things are heaped up, which agree to the subject, in keeping close to the metaphor. A parallel is run too far, when a great number of conformities between the figure, and the thing represented by the figure are heaped together. This is almost the perpetual vice of mean and low preachers; for when they catch at a figurative word, or a metaphor, as when God's word is called a fire, or a sword; or the church a house, or a dove; or Jesus Christ a light, a sun, a vine, or a door; they never fail of making a long detail of conformities between the figures and the subjects themselves; and frequently say ridiculous things. This vice must be avoided, and you must be content to explain

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* To be overcharged with *doctrine* is the great fault of Dr. OWEN's and Dr. GOODWIN's sermons; and it is attended with all the inconveniences mentioned by Mr. *Claude*. ROB.

† As in explaining this text, *God is a sun;* it would be stretching the metaphor into an allegory to make a great collection of what God is in *himself;* what to *us;* what he does in the understanding and conscience of the *believer;* what he operates on the *wicked;* what his *absence* causeth; and all these under terms which had a perpetual relation to the *sun*. CLAUDE.

the metaphor in a few words, and to mark the principal agreements, in order afterwards to cleave to the thing itself.*

5. *Reasoning* must not be carried too far. This may be done many ways; either by long trains of reasons, composed of a quantity of propositions chained together, or principles and consequences; which way of reasoning is embarrassing and painful to the auditor; or by making many branches of reasons, and establishing them one after another; which is tiresome and fatiguing to the mind. The mind of man loves to be conducted in a more smooth and easy way; all must not be proved at once; but, supposing principles which are true and plain, and which you, when it is necessary, are capable of proving and supporting, you must be content with using them to prove what you have in hand. Yet I do not mean, that in reasoning, arguments should be so short and dry, and proposed in so brief a manner as to divest the truth of half its force, as many authors leave them. I only mean, that a due medium should be preserved; that is, without fatiguing the mind and attention of the hearer, reasons should be placed in just as much force and clearness, as are necessary to produce the effect.†

In a principal matter, which is likely to be much questioned or controverted by the hearers, you will be obliged to treat the subject fully and *ex professo*. In such a case, you must propose to convince and bare down the opponent's judgment, by making truth triumph in many different manners. In such a case, many proofs associated together to produce one effect are like many rays of light, which naturally strengthen each other, and which altogether, form a body of brightness which is irresistible.

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* Mr. *Rollin*, from *Tully*, observes, that the surest and easiest way to represent the beauty of a metaphor, and in general to explain the beautiful passages in authors with justness, is to substitute natural expressions instead of figurative, and to divest a very bright phrase of all its ornaments, by reducing it to a simple proposition. ROLLIN's *Bell. Lett.* Vol. ii.

For understanding the *prophecies*, we are in the first place to acquaint ourselves with the *figurative* language of the prophets. This language is taken from analogy between the world natural, and an empire or kingdom considered as a world politic. *Sir* ISAAC NEWTON on *Daniel*, chap. ii.

† When an idea is carried to a certain degree of evidence and simplicity, all that is added to clear, only serves to obscure and confound it. SAURIN, *Ser.* Tom. iv.

§ 4. You must, as much as possible, abstain from all sorts of observations foreign from *theology*. In this class I place,

1. *Grammatical* observations, which not being within the people's knowledge can only weary and disgust them. They may nevertheless be used when they furnish an agreeable sense of the word, or open some important observation on the subject itself, provided it be done very seldom and very pertinently.

2. *Critical* observations about different readings, different punctuations, &c. must be avoided. Make all the use you can of critical knowledge yourself: but spare the people the account, for it must needs be very disagreeable to them.

3. Avoid *philosophical* and *historical* observations, and all such as belong to *rhetoric;* or if you do use them, do not insist on them, and choose only those which give either some light to the text, or heighten its pathos and beauty: all others must be rejected.

Lastly, I say the same of passages from *profane authors*, or *Rabbies*, or *Fathers*, with which many think they enrich their sermons. This farrago is only a vain ostentation learning; and, very often, they who fill their sermons with such quotations know them only by relation of others. However I would not blame a man who should use them discreetly. A quotation not common, and properly made, has a very good effect.

§ 5. According to promise, we proceed to take some notice of *connexion* and *division*. The CONNEXION is the relation of your text to the foregoing or following verses. To find this, consider the scope of the discourse and consult commentators; particularly exercise your own *good sense;** for commentators frequently trifle; and give forced and far-fetched connexions, all which ought to be avoided, for they are not natural, and sometimes good sense will discover the scope and *design* of a writer far better than this kind of critics.†

There are texts, the connexions of which, I own, it will be sometimes difficult to perceive. In such cases endeavour to discover them by frequent and intense meditation, or take that which commentators furnish; and among many which they give, choose that which appears most natural; and if you can find none likely, the best way will be to let the passage alone.

The connexion is a part which must be very little insisted on, because the hearers always pass it over, and receive but little instruction from it. When the coherence will furnish any *agreeable* considerations for the illustration of the text they must be put in the discussion; and this will very often happen.

§ 6. Division, in general, ought to be restrained to a small number of parts; they should never exceed four or five at the most: the most admired sermons have only two or three parts:‡

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* *Consult good sense.* A friend of mine, disgusted with the common representation of the devil carrying our Saviour in his claws, as a bird of prey carries a dove through the air, and setting him on a pinnacle of the temple, tried Mr. Claude's experiment. He set a sensible little boy to read the fourth of Matthew, and after he had read the fifth verse, "The devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple," he asked the little gentleman, How do you think the devil *took* Jesus Christ, and *set* him on a pinnacle of the temple? Why, Sir, replied the little expositor, as you would *take* me up to the top of St. Paul's.
Rob.

† To observe this *design* is no small help towards understanding the biblical writers: On the contrary, to consider the whole bible as we consider the book of Proverbs, and to ground enormous doctrines on detached sentences, are gross absurdities, manifest abuses of the word of God. Rob.

‡ Mr. Claude's direction to be *sparing of divisions* is worthy of regard by all who would preach so as to be understood, or remembered by their hearers; for a multitude of particulars rather puzzle than instruct; instead of helping, they hurt the memory.
Rob.

Qui recte *diviserit*, nunquam poterit in rerum *ordine* errare. Certa sunt enim non solum in *digérendis* quæstionibus, sed etiam

There are two sorts of divisions which we may very properly make: the first, which is the most common, is the division of the *text* into its parts; the other is of the *discourse*, or sermon itself, which is made from the text.

This last, that is to say, the *division* of a discourse, is proper, when, to give light to a text, it is necessary to mention many things which the text supposes but does not formally express; and which must be collected elsewhere, in order to enable you to give in the end a just explanation of the text. In such a case you may divide your discourse into two parts, the first containing some *general considerations* necessary for understanding the

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in *exequendis*, si modo recte dicimus, *prima*, ac *secunda*, et *deinceps*: cohæretque omnis, rerum copulatio, ut ei nihil nec subtrahi sine manifesto intellectu, nec inseri possit. QUINT. *inst.* Lib. xi. cap. 2.

To *compose* a sermon is to unite several ideas into one body; *sometimes* it would be absurd to mention *each component part*; and sometimes it would be absurd to *omit* the mention of it. The sermons of many *practical* preachers are mere *essays*: and those of many *doctrinal* preachers, dry *numeration-tables*, the figures and fractions of which frighten all but skilful arithmeticians. There is certainly a *middle* way, wherein a sermon, like a fine piece of history-painting, insensibly distinguishes objects, fastens the eye, and dilates the heart. ROB.

Mr. LYE (Morn. Exer. Methodized, Serm. xviii.) on 1 Cor. vi. 17. after his *Introduction* and *Coherence*, observes, "Having thus *beaten up and levelled* our way to the text, I shall not stand *to shred* the words into any *unnecessary* parts." He then lays down one *Observation*, *True believers are closely united unto Christ Jesus;* which he proposes to *explain*, *confirm*, and *apply*. Having discussed the *first* of these division in *twenty-eight* particulars variously disposed, he adds: "Thus much for the *Explication* of the *terms* of our proposition, *for the fixing of it on a right basis*. I now proceed to the *second* part of my discourse." The whole sermon contains *eighty-six heads!*

Mr. DRAKE (ibid. Serm. xx.) on John i. 12, 13, has about *one hundred and seventy heads;* and yet, after a short exordium, he introduces the *doctrine* of the discourse with observing: "Passing by sundry useful points, I shall pitch only upon that which comprehends the *marrow and substance of both verses*: DOCT., *Every true believer is a child of God by regeneration and adoption.*" What auditor could have supposed, after being thus presented with the *marrow* of the text, that it would be served up with such a frightful sight of *bones!*

text; and the second the *particular explication* of the text itself.

1. This method is proper, when a *prophecy of the Old Testament* is handled; for, generally, the understanding of these prophecies depends on many general considerations, which, by exposing and refuting false senses, open a way to the true explication.

2. This method is also proper on a text *taken from a dispute*, the understanding of which must depend on the state of the question, the hypotheses of adversaries, and the principles of the inspired writers. All these lights are previously necessary and they can only be given by general considerations.*

3. This method also is proper in a *conclusion* drawn from a long preceding discourse; as for example, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."†

4. The same method is proper for texts which are *quoted* in the New Testament *from the Old.* You must prove, by general considerations, that the text is properly produced, and then you may come clearly to its explication.‡

5. In this class must be placed divisions into *different regards*, or different *views*.‖ These, to speak properly, are not divisions of a text into its parts, but rather dif-

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* For example, Rom. iii. 28. "We conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law."

† Rom. v. 1.

‡ Of this kind are Heb. i. 5, 6 "I will be to him a Father," &c. ii. 6. "One in a certain place," &c. iii. 7. "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if" &c.

‖ *Different regards.* Thus Mr. SAURIN (from Luke xxiii. 29. *Behold the days come,* &c.) on the miseries of the Jews, consider their calamities, which every body knows, 1. As a *proof* of the divinity of the Scriptures, which so often foretold their dispersion. 2. As a *ratification* of the execration denounced on themselves, "His blood be on us," &c. 3. As a *seal* which God put to Christ's *mission.* 4. As an instructive *lesson* to Christians; "If thou continuest in his goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." SAUR. *Serm.* Tom. I.

ferent applications, which are made of the same texts to divers subjects.

Finally, Typical texts should be divided thus; and a great number of *passages in the Psalms*, which relate not only to David, but also to *Jesus Christ;* such should be considered first literally, as they relate to David; and then in their mystical sense, as they refer to the Lord Jesus.

There are also typical passages, which, besides their literal senses, have also *figurative* meanings, relating not only to Jesus Christ, but also to the church in general, and to every believer in particular; or which have *different degrees* of their mystical accomplishment.*

§ 7. As to the *division* of the text itself, sometimes the order of the words is so clear and natural, that no division is necessary; you need only follow simply the order of the words.†

Most texts, however, ought to be formally divided, for which purpose, you must principally have regard to the order of nature, and put that division which naturally precedes in the first place, and the rest must follow, each in its proper order. This may easily be done by reducing the text to a *categorical proposition*, beginning with the subject, passing to the attribute, and then to the other terms;‡ your judgment will direct you how to place them.§

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* So Dan. ix. 7. "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee," &c. So again, Heb. iii. 7, 8. "To-day if you will hear his voice," &c.

Types should be handled cautiously, and soberly, and always under the immediate direction of the New Testament writers. A man is always safe when he follows these guides. ROB.

† As for example, Eph. i. 5. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," &c.

‡ Thus, Heb. x. 10. "By the which will we are sanctified," &c.

§ It must not be forgotten, that this operation, and these terms belong to the *laboratory*, and should never appear in prescriptions to the people. And it is ever to be remembered, *negative, positive, categoric,* &c. are only to aid *private* composition, and are no more to be mentioned in public preaching than the naked canvass is to be seen in a finished painting;—especially as Mr. *Claude's* end may

It remains to be observed, that there are two natural orders; one natural in regard to subjects themselves, the other natural in regard to us. The first considers every thing in its natural situation as things are *in themselves*, without any regard to our knowledge of them; the other, which I call natural in *regard to us*, observes the situation which things have as they appear in our minds, or enter into our thoughts. When in any text the natural order of things differs from that which

be better answered without them. He aims to make divisions *natural:* here are a few examples:

Archbishop *Flechier*, on Saul's conversion, considers, *First*, What Jesus Christ did for St. Paul. *Secondly*, What St. Paul did for Jesus Christ. In the *first* part he opens divine *compassion*, as a spring whence flowed Paul's creation, preservation, conversion, gifts, graces, usefulness, &c. The *second* part relates the *use* that St. Paul made of all these, out of gratitude, and to God's glory. Flech. Serm. Tom. I.

The Archbishop of Cambray, *Fenelon*, (preaching to a religious order, some of whom had been employed in missions to the East, from Isa. lx. 1. *Arise, shine, thy light is come*, &c.) introduces his division thus; 'But I feel my heart moved within me; it is divided between joy and grief; the ministry of these apostolic men, and the call of these Eastern people, are the triumphs of religion: but perhaps they may also be the effects of a secret reprobation, which hangs over us. Perhaps these people may rise upon our ruins, as the Gentiles rose upon the ruins of the Jews. Let us then *rejoice* in the Lord; but let us rejoice with *trembling*. These two exhortations divide my discourse. Fenel. *Oeuvr. Philos.* Tom. ii.

Bishop *Massilon*, preaching to his clergy, on Luke ii. 34. "This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel," after an agreeable exordium, says, 'Let us pass all other reasons of this mystery, and confine ourselves to one single truth, which regards ourselves.' He then accommodates the words to every minister entering on his holy office, adding, 'for on this solemn occasion it may be said of him. Behold *this man is set for the fall,* or *rising again of many in Israel;* he comes to be the instrument of the *perdition*, or the *salvation* of many On this terrible alternative runs the destiny of a minister, and it is literally true of every one of you, that you already are, or are about to be established to build up, or to pull down; to rid the church of scandals, or to cause new ones; to save or to destroy; in one word, to be a *savour of life unto life*, or, *of death unto death* among the people; these are the two parts, &c.'

I will not say that these gentlemen did not reduce their texts to categorical propositions in private, in the study; but I may venture to say, if they did, they brought them to a right issue in the pulpit. And this I think is Mr. Claude's meaning. Rob.

regards our knowledge of them, we may take that way which we like best; however, I believe, it would be best to follow that of our knowledge, because it is easiest, and clearest for the common people.

There are texts which contain the end and the means; the cause and the effect; the principle and the consequence deduced from the principle; the action and the principle of the action; the occasion and the motive of the occasion: in these cases, it is arbitrary either to begin with the means, and afterwards treat of the end; with the effect, and proceed to the cause, and so on; or to follow the contrary order.* In short, it is always necessary to consult good sense, and never to be so conducted by general rules, as not to attend to particular circumstances.

Above all things, in divisions, take care of putting any thing in the first part which supposes the understanding of the second, or which obliges you to treat of the second, to make the first understood; for by these means you will throw yourself into very great confusion, and be obliged to make many tedious repetitions. One of the greatest excellencies of a sermon is, the harmony of its component parts, that the first leads to the second, the second serves to introduce the third; that they which go before excite a desire for those which are to follow: and, in a word, that the last has a special relation to all the others, in order to form in the hearers' minds a complete idea of the whole. This cannot be done with all sorts of texts, but with those only which are proper to form such a design upon. Remember too, it is not enough to form such a plan, it must also be happily executed.

You will often find it necessary, in texts which you reduce to categorical propositions, to treat of the subject, as well as of the attribute; then you must make of the subject one part. This will always happen, when the subject of the proposition is expressed in terms that want explaining, or which furnish many considerations.* Sometimes it is necessary not only to make one part of the *subject*, and another of the *attribute;* but also to make a third of the *connexion* of the subject with the attribute, and to give *the entire sense of the whole proposition.*

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* For instance, 2 Tim. ii. 10. " Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, &c. Yet some texts *determine* the division, as Phil. ii. 13. " It is God who worketh," &c. the *action*, the *effect*, and the *spring*.

When in a text there are several terms which need a particular explanation, and which cannot be explained without confusion, or without dividing the text into too many parts, then I would not divide the *text* at all: but I would divide the *discourse* into two or three parts; and I would propose, first explain the terms, and then the subject itself.† There are many texts, in discussing which it is not necessary to treat of either subject or attribute, but all the discussion depends on the terms *syncategorematica.*‡

In texts of *reasoning*, the propositions which compose the syllogism must be examined after another, and each apart. Sometimes it will be even necessary to consider the *force* of the reasoning, and to make one part of that also. Sometimes we shall find a *proposition concealed*, which it will be proper to supply. You must in such a case consider, whether the hidden proposition be important enough to make a part, which it will sometimes be.§ There are texts of reasoning, which are composed of an *objection* and the *answer*, and the division of such is plain; for they naturally divide into the objection and the solution.||

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* For example, John xv. 5. "He that abideth in me, and I in him," &c. So again, John iii. 36. "He that believeth on the Son," &c. &c.

† Thus Acts ii. 27. "Thou wilt not leave my soul," &c. *General* considerations on the *application; particular* considerations on the *terms;* the *subject* itself.

‡ Words, which of themselves have no signification, but in their *connexion* are peculiarly emphatic. For example, John iii. 16. "God *so* loved the world," &c.

§ As perhaps in Rom. iv. 1. "What shall we say then, that Abraham our father," &c.

|| As Rom. vi. 1, 2. "What shall we say then? shall we con-

There are some texts of reasoning, which are extremely *difficult* to divide, because they cannot be reduced into many propositions without confusion, or savouring too much of the schools, or having a defect in the division; in short, without being unsatisfactory. In such a case, let ingenuity and good sense contrive some extraordinary way,* which, if proper and agreeable, cannot fail of producing a good effect.†

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tinue in sin," &c. Prov. xxii. 2. "The rich and the poor meet together," &c. 2 Cor. xi. 4. "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus," &c.

* See SAURIN's Sermons, Vol. VI. translated by Dr. HUNTER, as a continuation of Mr. ROBINSON's Volumes, Serm. ii. Exordium.

† For example, John iv. 10. "If thou knewest the gift of God," &c. On this text Mr. CLAUDE suggests a division, First, *General propositions* contained in the words; and, Secondly, the *particular application* of these to the Samaritan woman.

BOURDALOUE, the celebrated French preacher, has an admired sermon on this text, which he entitles, "On divine grace."—For the sake of the student, a young composer, whose benefit is consulted in this publication, we will suppose that the *first rude sketch* was not unlike the following:

I. The *sweetness of grace.*
  1. It *waits* for sinners.
  2. It takes a *favourable opportunity.*
  3. *Prevents* our solicitations. And
  4. This in an *engaging manner.*
  5. Suits itself to *our weaknesses.* And
  6. Shews the *deceitfulness* of what it requires us to renounce; *vice versâ.*

II. The *force* of grace.
  1. This Samaritan was an *infidel.*
  2. Of bad *moral* conduct.
  3. The change made was attended with remarkable *circumstances.*

Next observe how these bare out-lines, under the skilful hand of the author, begin to assume a new form; as preparatory, however, to the full composition.

EXORDIUM.

This *Gift* of God, to which the Samaritan woman was an entire stranger, is the *grace* of Christ.

This is the excellent gift which it behoves us to *understand* thoroughly; *superior* to all the gifts of nature.

Of this gift, however, we are grossly *ignorant;* and, through a criminal ingratitude, are at no pains to come at the knowledge of it. *If thou knowest the gift of God.*

There are sometimes texts which *imply* many im-

DIVISION.

To *dispose* with sweetness, and *execute* with force, are the properties of *wisdom.*—And this, christians, is the justest idea of the *grace* of Jesus Christ; these are its characteristics, *sweetness* and *force:* Sweetness, in the engaging manner whereby it *disposes* the sinner to conversion; Force, in the *victories* it gains over the sinner at the moment of conversion.

FIRST, then, let us view the grace of Jesus Christ, using all the charms and attractives of its *sweetness.*

SECONDLY, let us view this grace, by its *force* and efficacy, *actually* converting the sinner; and, from the gulph of sin into which she was plunged, raising her to the summit of holiness.

FIRST PART.

It is not at all surprising that *sweetness* should be the *first* characteristic of that grace which is the origin of conversion, and an immediate emanation from the heart of God.

But it concerns us to know exactly in *what* this sweetness of grace *consists*, which are its insinuations, and what it operates.

Its *methods* differ widely from those of conquerors. In order to subdue us, it *seems* to submit to our will. Take not offence at this mode of speaking.

I say that it seems to submit to our will: for,

1. It *waits* for us, and bears with us whole years together.

Behold Jesus Christ, the power of God, weary, his spirits exhausted, in a pensive posture on the brink of a well. What doth he *wait* for? An infidel soul, whom he means to save; a sinner, whom he hath chosen.

Ah! christians, how many sinners all over the world, and perhaps among those whom I address, are at this very time in the same situation as was that criminal and obstinate woman.

God is great, because he is eternal, &c. and indeed nothing can be a stronger or more convincing testimony of his dignity, than that tranquillity with which he suffers, and, as it were, connives at the offences of mankind.

But from this principle, beloved hearers, what consequence ought to be deduced? Doth it follow that the sinner can pretend to a *right* of putting off his conversion, and *obliging* the Almighty to wait? Thus libertines and worldlings reason; but God forbid that we should: because if God waits for us, it is solely to his *grace* that we are indebted.

Many there are for whom God waits not, and on whom, in order to strike *others* with terror, he is pleased to exercise his avenging wrath, by letting them die in their sin: *I go, and you shall seek me, and you shall die in your sin.*

It is uncertain how long God will wait, no secret being more impenetrable: *Who knoweth if God will turn and forgive.* Our *presumption* alone, in promising ourselves that God will wait for us, portant *truths* without expressing them, and yet it will

is a sufficient inducement to make him *not* wait for us.—This point would alone require an entire discourse: but I proceed to another.

2. The Saviour, by virtue of the sweetness of his grace, is ever on the watch for *favourable opportunities* to gain us over.

Not that God has any *necessity* for contrivances of this nature to communicate his grace; nor that grace *depends* upon occasions and opportunities, to produce its effects; whereas the contrary is true.

Instance in *Saul.*—Is it not in this manner, if I may so express myself, that God lies in wait for his elect, on certain occasions which his infinite wisdom hath ordained, for their conversion and sanctification?

This is apparent in the Samaritan woman. But if we consider it in the right light, we shall find that our own case is parallel to hers.

Which then, in our estimation, is the capital point, and grand maxim of christian wisdom? Imprint it, in your minds, beloved hearers, and preserve the remembrance of it. It is, diligently to *watch,* and not to let slip these favourable occasions.

How many things, the consequences of which are hidden from you, are means which God hath chosen to withdraw you from the world?—For instance: The intercourse you hold with that servant of God, that pious book of which you relish the reading, that edifying and convincing sermon which you hear, that sudden death of your friend which terrifies you, &c. *Watch* and *pray* therefore.

3. I add, that the grace which works our conversion, how much soever it imports us to solicit it, is ever sure to *prevent* (or go before) our solicitations.

Were I able to prevent it, it would be no longer a grace, because it would suppose in us merit. Never should we seek him, through grace, if by another grace he had not himself condescended to seek us.

This is plainly seen in the conversion of the Samaritan. The Son of God waits not until she make some advances towards coming to him, but accosts her, talks to her, &c.

Such is the mystery, and prodigy too of Almighty love! He is desirous himself to prevent sinners; that is, to seek vile creatures, to call rebellious and ungrateful souls to his service, &c. to be beforehand with them, at a time, too, when they think not of him: I say more; at a time when they revolt from him, when they make head against him, &c.

Ah! Lord, is it then true that I am unable to love thee, amiable as thou art, if thou raise not that desire in me? As it is for the credit of thy grace that it should first seek me, I will readily and willingly submit to that law.

4. But further: In what *manner* doth grace prevent us? Authoritatively and imperiously? No, instead of taking forcibly, it asks placidly what it means to obtain.

Our Saviour might have chosen to use all his power, and *obliged* the sinner to pay him, instantly and without reply, a forced obedience. But how doth he begin? *Woman believe me.*

be necessary to mention and enlarge upon them, either

Though absolute master, he asks but little, in order to give much. What doth Jesus Christ ask? A little water: *Give me to drink.* And why water? In order to raise in her a desire of an infinitely more excellent water which he intends to give her.

A noble idea this, christians, of what daily experience teaches concerning the methods of grace. Give me this, says God, it is certainly but little—this little victory over passion, this little violence done to humour, this little sacrifice of temporal interest, &c. And are we not to blame if we refuse?

5. Proceed we, however, to a more affecting article. I hold, with St. Chrysostom, that grace, in order to act with more sweetness, suits itself to our inclinations, to our taste, to our talents, and, in some shape, to our *weaknesses.*

Any one, but the Saviour, who had heard her dispute, would have soon discouraged her, would have told that it was not her business thus to reason. What then doth he do? This is a vain, curious woman, and he takes the advantage of her very curiosity.

Instructing the vulgar, he made use of parables; plain and familiar comparisons, adapting his discourses to their understandings. But as to this woman, sinner as she is, he converses with her in terms proportioned to the grandeur and intricacy of the subject on which their conversation turns: the nature of God, the perfection of his being, the purity of his worship, adoration in spirit; and thereby removes her erroneous notions relating to the Deity, &c.

Now is it not thus that *our* minds and hearts are influenced by grace? Are we impetuous? It animates us with zeal, and impels us to good. Are we susceptible of the softer passions? It inspires us with a tenderness of love for God, which not unfrequently occasions our shedding floods of tears. Are we of a gentle, easy temper? It rectifies it, and converts it into more advantageous charity to our neighbour. Are we of a rigid and severe disposition? It converts this severity into religious fervour. Thus it makes use of our own endowments for the compassing of its ends; and sets whatever is in us on work to bring about our salvation.

6. True it is, christians, God obligeth us by this grace to despise all those things which the world esteems; to renounce, from our heart, the honours and the pleasures of this world. But herein taste and see the sweetness of grace. He doth not oblige us to renounce the world, but by expelling from our hearts the love of it.

Now it is no hard matter to bid adieu to that which we neither esteem nor love. This is the lesson which our Saviour gives the Samaritan woman: *Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again.* That is, whoever is ambitious of honours in this world shall never be content.

When once I am persuaded of this principle, I wean my affections from created things without reluctance. Sometimes, indeed, it obliges me to perform difficult and painful things for God; but

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because they are useful on some important occasions,

at the same time furnishes me with sufficient inducements. *If thou knewest the gift of God.* That is, christians, if ye knew what God is, &c.

Such is the agency of grace. In this manner God, by the sweetness of his grace and of his Holy Spirit, becomes master of our hearts.

Now just so, after God's example, we shall insinuate ourselves into the souls of men. It will not be by authority, much less by the haughty spirit of sway; no, nor by superiority of abilities or understanding. To win our neighbour, and to move his heart, we must bear with his failings, compassionate his weaknesses, &c. *Put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy.*

This practical doctrine is applicable to us all; but to us particularly, beloved brethren, whom God hath called, in a special manner, to the ministry, for the conversion and edification of souls. Therefore allow me to apply to you, and to myself too, as it is a perfect model for us.

By sweetness it is that our zeal can affect the hearts of sinners. Any other means will fail of success. What though you should speak the language of the apostles, and even the language of angels: if it were not seasoned with evangelical mildness, it would avail nothing.

I would not, however, my brethren, insinuate that we should hide from sinners the deformity of their case; you know how much I abhor such sentiments. But to this severity, we must join mildness. It must be a discreet and amiable severity.

I would to God, brethren, that this truth were rooted in our minds. Be that as it may, beloved hearers, one thing there is which will render us inexcusable at the judgment of God, and that thing is the infinite sweetness with which he governs us.

It remains for me to shew that this holy grace, though *sweet* in its manner of influencing the sinner, is not the less *forcible* in its action and impulse, which will manifestly appear from the sequel of the passage already mentioned, and which I am going to set forth in the second part.

SECOND PART.

When Pharaoh's magicians saw the astonishing prodigies that Moses performed all over Egypt, by the touch only of his mystical rod, which struck them with such terror, they confessed at last that *it was the finger of God.*

And for my part, christians, though I were to consider no more than the conversion of this woman, as related in the gospel, I should certainly conclude that God hath secret, invisible springs to move our hearts, and wind them as he pleases.

Now in what consists the miracle of this extraordinary conversion? In the relation it bears to the two powers of the soul, to which internal grace is immediately communicated: namely, to the un-

or because they are important of themselves. Then the

derstanding and to the heart. A miracle of grace in the *victory* it gains, in the *change* it works, and attended with *circumstances* which leave no room to doubt that it was the work of the omnipotent hand of God.

Redouble your attention, beloved hearers, and thereby make up for the deficiency which arises from the necessity of contracting into a small compass, a subject that would require a whole discourse.

Here is a miracle of grace, and of its force, in the *victory* which it gains. Only follow the thread of the sacred narrative, and you will agree to this.

1. This woman was an *infidel*, as the Samaritans were idolaters in the main; continuing to adore the false gods of their ancestors.

She was also an *heretic*, for the Samaritans practised a kind of judaism, a judaism greatly corrupted. It was an avowed schism. *The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.*

Vain, also, she was, and self-sufficient, prepossessed with her error, and determined to maintain it.

Nevertheless, we now see, that grace, by a *divine virtue*, a virtue beaming from the heart of God, converts this woman. Jesus, after having made her renounce the superstitious practices of her forefathers, and condemn the errors she maintained, makes her willing to acknowledge and adore him, Jewess as she is, as the Author of her salvation; *is not this the Christ?*

2. But beside her obstinacy in unbelief, she was lewd and libertine in her *moral conduct*. She publicly cohabited with unmarried men, was abandoned to concubinage, a concubinage of which she had contracted a scandalous habit, *Thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband.*

Now no disease is equally unsusceptible of cure with this. If there be a demon capable of resisting God and his grace, it is, beyond dispute, the spirit of impurity. But this sinner, this prostitute, this slave to infamous passions, is cleansed from sin, and robed with sanctity.

She is no longer that barefaced cause of scandal, that incentive to wickedness. She is *a new creature in Christ;* a soul entirely consecrated to God, that breathes nothing but his love, &c.

3. If the grace of Christ Jesus works a miracle in the conversion of this woman, the miraculous *manner* of its operation shews very evidently its force and power.

For, beloved christians, is it not astonishing that this should be the business of a moment? This is not like the ordinary course of providence; but like the work of creation. As by one word speaking God calls forth myriads of beings out of nothing, expands the heavens, fixes the earth, gives to this vast universe its perfection: *He spake and they were made.* Thus the Son of God says but a word to the Samaritan, *I am he;* and behold, all at once, her heart is pierced with the most holy, the most lively, the most tender sentext may be divided into two parts, the one *implied*, the other *expressed*. I own, this way of division is bold, and must neither be abused, nor used too often: but there are occasions, it is certain, on which it may be very justly and agreeably taken.*

timents. A word, says St. AUGUSTIN, more efficacious than that which God created the world.

I ask if any thing externally appeared that could give our Saviour so strong an influence? Did she see him at that moment exerting his power over storms and billows, giving sight to the blind, raising the dead? The conversion of the world, without a miracle, would be, according to St. AUGUSTIN, the greatest of miracles. Now we see, beloved hearers, this miracle of miracles fulfilled.

This is not all: Christ being resolved to display in this sinner the whole force of his grace, she believes not in him, like the woman of *Canaan*, because he delivered her daughter from the devil, &c.

In fine, from a sinner she was changed, at once, into an apostle; she goes and announces Jesus Christ to those who know him not. And, without derogating from the dignity of the apostles, we may assert that the *first* apostle of christianity was the Samaritan woman. Her zeal is inflamed in such a manner, that she waits not a moment. She leaves her vessel, &c.

PERORATION.

And now, christians, what inference should be drawn from all this? Ah! let us no longer allege, that our sinful state hath rendered us *weak*, and our weakness is an unsurmountable obstacle to conversion. It is chiefly in our infirmity that grace blazes forth in all its lustre. *Power is made perfect in weakness.*

Besides; and with this I shall conclude; hath God drawn you out of the gulf? and have you felt the impression of his grace? imitate the zeal of this edifying convert. On a father, it is incumbent to preach to his children. On a master, to preach to his domestics. But converted sinners ought to be, of all, the most strongly affected with this duty. If therefore there is any one among those who hear me, who heretofore led a libertine life, but is now reformed by divine grace: Behold, dear christian brother, the pattern which God lays to-day before you. Bring back the accomplices of your crimes to Christ our Lord.

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* Thus a certain preacher on a fast day, from Isa. lv. 6. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found"—divided his text into two parts.

I. Some things *implied*.

1. That *God was far from us*. Here he enumerated the *afflictions* of the church, to prove the absence of the favour of God.

2. That *we* were *far from him*. Here he enumerated the *sins*, to prove how distant we were from God.

3. That there was a *time* when God would not be found, al-

In texts of *history*, divisions are easy. Sometimes an action is related in all its *circumstances*, and then you may consider the *action* in itself first, and afterwards the *circumstances* of the action. Sometimes it is necessary to remark the *occasion* of an action, and to make one part of it. Sometimes there are *actions* and *words*, which must be considered *separately*. Sometimes it is not necessary to make any division at all: but the order of the history must be followed. In short, it depends on the state of each text in particular.*

§ 8. To render a division agreeable and easy to be remembered by the hearer, endeavour to reduce it as often as possible to simple terms. By a simple term I mean a *single word;* in the same sense as in logic what they call *terminus simplex* is distinguished from what they call *terminus complex*. Indeed, when the parts of a discourse are expressed in a multiplicity of words, they are not only embarrassing, but also useless to the hearers, for they cannot retain them. Reduce them, then, as often as you can to a single term.†

Observe, also, as often as possible, to *connect* the parts of your division together; either by way of opposition,

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though we sought him. Here he represented that sad time when God's patience was, as it were, wearied out, and added, that then he displayed his heaviest judgments, without speaking any more the language of mercy.

II. Some things *expressed.*

1. He explained what it was to "seek the Lord," and by a pathetic *exhortation* stirred up his hearers to make that search.

2. He explained what was the *time*, in which God would be found, and renewed his exhortation to *repentance*, mixing therewith hopes of pardon.

His sermon was very much admired, particularly for its order.

CLAUDE.

* Most if not all these may be exemplified by Mr. *Saurin's* sermons, on the history of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

ROB.

† Mr. *Claude*, indeed, does not speak here of the preacher, but of the hearers; and for their sakes would have the divisions few, and the terms expressive of them simple; a rule invariably observed by all good preachers. However, this must needs be a great help to an *extempore preacher* as well as to the hearers. ROB.

No preacher, perhaps, exemplified this rule more happily than *Bourdaloue*.

or of cause and effect, or of action and end, or action and motive, or in some way or other; for to make a division of many parts, which have no connection, is exceedingly offensive to the hearers who will be apt to think, that all you say, after such a division, is nonsense; besides, the human mind, naturally loving order, will much more easily retain a division, in which there appears a connection.*

As to *subdivisions*, it is always necessary to make them; for they very much assist composition, and diffuse perspicuity into a discourse: but it is not always needful to mention them; on the contrary, they must be very seldom mentioned; because it would load the hearers mind with a multitude of particulars. Nevertheless, when subdivisions can be made agreeably, either on account of the excellency of the matter, or when it will raise the hearer's attention, or when the parts harmonize justly and agreeably one with another, you may formally mention them: but this must be done very seldom; for the hearers would be presently tired of such a method, and by that means cloyed of the whole.†

§ 9. I proceed now from general to more particular rules, and the first thing that I would have our intelligent composer do, is to observe the *nature of his text*, for there are doctrinal, historical, prophetical, and typical texts. Some contain a command, others a prohibition; some a promise, others a threatening, some a wish, others an exhortation; some a censure, others a motive to action, &c. I take the greatest part to be *mixed*, containing different kinds of things. It is very important for a man who would compose to examine his text well upon these articles, and carefully to distinguish all its characters, for in so doing he will presently see what way he ought to take.*

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* This direction of Mr. *Claude's*, like most of his other rules, is founded on his knowledge of human nature, which delights in *orderly connections*, and is extremely disgusted with every thing incongruous. **Rob.**

† Powerful *reasoning* should be the soul of all our sermons. Reasoning in eloqueuce is like love in religion: without love you may have the shadow, but you cannot have the substance of religion.—Without love you are *nothing:* if you have not love, your virtue is only noise, it is only as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. In like manner in regard to eloquence, speak with authority, open all the treasures of erudition, give full scope to a lively and sublime imagination, and harmonize your periods,—yet what will all your discourses without *reason* be? a noise, a sounding brass, a tinkling cymbal. You may confound, but you cannot convince; you may dazzle, but you cannot instruct; you may delight, but cannot hope to change, to sanctify, and to transform your hearers. **Saurin.**

Having well examined of what kind the text is, enter into the matter, and begin the composition; for which purpose you must observe, there are two general ways, or two manners of composing. One is the way of *explication*, the other of *observations:* nor must it be imagined, that you may take which of the two ways you please on every text; for some texts must be treated in an explicatory method, and others necessarily require the way of observations.

In discernment upon this point the preacher's judgment is displayed; for, as texts of scripture are almost infinite, it is impossible to give perfect rules thereupon.

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* A preacher must examine his *text*. And may we not add, he ought first to examine his own *heart;* and, if he be animated with the pure desire of pleasing God, he may very rationally *pray*, yea, he ought to pray for the promised *assistance* of the Holy Spirit. *Purity* of heart, *prayer* to God, and diligence in *study*, should go together. ROB.

The following is a prayer of T. AQUINAS, before *studying* or preaching:—Creator, ineffabilis Deus! qui de thesauris sapientiæ tuæ novem ordines angelorum informasti, et eos miro ordine super cælum empyreum collocasti, elegantissime partes universi disposuisti; tu, inquam, qui verus fons luminis et sapientiæ diceris, atque supereminens principium, infundere digneris super intellectus nostri tenebras tuæ radium claritatis; duplicem, in qua nati sumus, removeas privationem, peccatum et ignorantiam. Qui linguas infantium facis disertas, linguam mean erudias, atque in labiis meis gratiam tuæ benedictionis infundis. Da mihi intelligendi acumen, retinendi capacitatem, interspectandi subtilitatem, addiscendi facultatem, loquendi gratian copiosam: gressum instuas, processum dirigas, et egressum compleas. Amen.

CASSANDRI Opera, Preces Eccles.

It depends, in general, on good sense; only this I say, when we treat of a plain subject, common and known to all the world, it is a great absurdity to adopt the plan of *explication*, and when we have to treat of a difficult or important subject, which requires explaining, it would be equally ridiculous to use that of *observations*.

The difficulty, of which we speak, may be considered, either in regard to the *terms* of the text only, the subject itself being clear, after the words are explained; or in regard to the *subject* only, the terms themselves being very intelligible; or in regard to *both terms and things*.

§ 10. (I.) Of texts to be discussed by way of explication. In the explication of the *terms*, first propose what they call *ratio dubitandi*, that is, whatever makes the difficulty. The reason of doubting, or the intricacy, arises often from several causes. Either the terms do not seem to make any sense at all; or they are equivocal, forming different senses; or the sense, which they seem at first to make, may be perplexed, improper, or contradictory; or the meaning, though clear in itself, may be controverted, and exposed to cavillers. In all these cases, after you have proposed the difficulty, determine it as briefly as you can; for which purpose avail yourself of *criticisms*,* notes, comments, paraphrases, &c. and, in one word, of the labours of other persons.

If none of these answer your expectation, endeavour to find something better yourself, for which purpose, examine all the circumstances of the text, what precedes, what follows, the general scope of the discourse, the particular design of the writer in the place where your text is, the subject of which it treats, parallel passages

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*. If *criticism*, or an ability to judge of writings, be, as that prince of ancient critics, LONGINUS, calls it, *πολλης πειρας τελευταιον επιγεννημα*, *the last offspring of long experience;* it can be no disparagement to any young gentleman to avoid uttering his *own criticisms*, in public, till age and private studies have rendered him capable. LONGINUS, *de Sublim* § 6. ROB.

of scripture which treat of the same subject, or those in which the same expressions are used, &c. and by these means it is almost impossible, that you should not content yourself. Above all, take care not to make of grammatical matters a principal part: but only treat of them as previously necessary for understanding the text.

§ 11. To proceed from terms to *things*. They must as I have said, be *explained*, when they are either difficult or important. There are several ways of explication. You may begin by refuting errors, into which people have fallen; or you may enter upon the subject immediately, and so come to a fair and precise declaration of the truth; and, after this, you may dilate, (if I may venture to say so) by a deduction of the principles, on which the text depends, and on the essential relations, in which it ought to be considered.*

When texts are misunderstood, and gross and pernicious errors adduced, first reject the erroneous sense, and (if necessary) even refute it, as well by reasons taken from the texts, as by arguments from other topicks, and at length establish the true sense.†

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* Thus, Acts ix. 5. "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

First, propose the *difficulty*. We easily perceive it is a *comparison*, taken from a vicious horse that will not obey his rider, when he spurs him, &c. We readily understand what *urged* Paul outwardly and inwardly to his conversion; and what *resisted* the calls of the Lord, and the inward motions of his Holy Spirit. But what do these words mean, *It is hard for thee* to resist? It cannot mean *impossible* to resist, which the word here used (Σηληρον) never signifies But what does Christ intend by "It is hard or disagreeable to thee to resist my grace?"

Secondly, *explain* the words. Render the words, *It is thy hardness* that resisteth my grace. For *σκληρον σοι*, according to the common usage of the Greek tongue, is put for, *σκληροτης σου*, *it is thy hardness*. The resistance proceeded from the hardness of his heart.

The same method may be observed concerning the *subject itself*, which is the doctrine of *irresistible grace*. Claude.

† For example, see the word used in John xvi. 12. "I have yet "many things to say," &c.

I would advise the same method for all *disputed texts*. Hold it as a maxim to begin where you can to open the way to a truth by rejecting a falsehood. Not that it can be always done; sometimes you must begin by explaining the truth, and afterwards reject the error; because there are certain occasions, on which the hearers' minds must be preoccupied, and because also, truth well proposed and fully established, naturally destroys error: but notwithstanding this, the most approved method is to begin by rejecting error. After all, it must be left to a man's judgment when he ought to take the different courses.

There are texts of explication, in which the difficulty arises neither from equivocal terms, nor from the different senses in which they may be taken, nor from objections which may be formed against them, nor from the abuse which heretics have made of them; *but from the intricacy of the subject itself*, which it may be difficult to comprehend, and may require great study and meditation: on such texts you need not, you must not amuse yourself in proposing difficulties, nor in making objections; but you must enter immediately into the explication of the matter, and take particular care to arrange your ideas well, that is to say, in a natural and easy order, beginning where you ought to begin; for if you do not *begin* right, you can do nothing to the purpose; and, on the contrary, if you take a right road, all will appear easy as you go on to the end.*

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* If, for example, says Mr. CLAUDE, I were to preach from this text, John i. 17, "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;" I would divide it into two parts. The first should regard the ministry of the law; the second that of the gospel.

The author then proceeds to expand his plan, which takes up, in Mr. ROBINSON's edition, no less than *forty-six pages*, including the multifarious *notes* upon it. So full a plan, therefore, and serving to shew, professedly, how to handle a subject *in itself intricate*, deserves attention. And as the Rev. Mr. SIMEON, of *Cambridge*, in his late valuable edition of CLAUDE's Essay, has given it in the form of a *regular scheme*, I shall take the liberty of inserting it in *his manner;* with a part of his introduction to it.

There are some texts which must be discussed by

'This *literal* method of explication, of which Mr. Claude has given the above example, is very justly accounted the *best* way of interpreting scripture. The editor, however, takes the liberty of observing, that it might have been better if Mr. C. had made fewer subdivisions, and had been more particular in his choice of them. It seems best to adopt those, which give a *just* view of the subject, and to reject every thing which appears forced or fanciful.

'The specimen now exhibited, though not altogether free from exception, is by no means unworthy of attention. And as it may help to give the reader some insight into the nature and use of the following skeletons, it is here drawn out in the form of those skeletons.' But we must remark, that as our page differs much from his, an exact conformity of appearance cannot be observed.

I. The ministry of the LAW.

The law may be considered as a ministry of *rigour*, as opposed to *grace*.
  Man neither knew himself nor his God.
  It was necessary, therefore, to discover to him his misery, and his duty—
  This was the end which God proposed in the ministry of the law.
  The ministration of the law was well calculated to answer this end—
It may be considered also as a ministry of *shadows* as opposed to *truth*.
  It held out *Promises* of what was afterwards to be accomplished—
  It exhibited in *Types* the mercies which God had in reserve for them—
  It imparted the *Beginnings* of that salvation, which was to be afterwards more largely bestowed—
  Yet it could only be called "*Law*," because, however the grace of the gospel was blended with that œconomy, the *legal* part was predominant—
The author, or dispenser of this law was *Moses*.
  God indeed was the first and principal author of this law—
  Moses was only the mediator by whom God dispensed it—
  Nor as a mediator was he a real, but only a typical mediator—
As the dispenser of it he was greatly honoured by God.
  He was the *Interpreter* of the Israelites to God, and of God to them—
  He was employed to *shew forth the mighty power of Jehovah*—
  He was inspired to *transmit in writing* the history of his own nation—

II. The ministry of the GOSPEL.

"Grace and truth" are here put for the gospel of Jesus Christ—
The Gospel is called *Grace*, in opposition to the *Rigours of the Law*.

way of explication, although neither terms nor things are difficult; but because the matter is important, and a mediation of it beautiful and full of edification. Passages of this kind must needs be proposed in all their extent.*

God manifested himself in it, not as on mount Sinai with thunderings, but in a *gentle manner*, under a veil of human flesh—
In it he reveals his *mercy* and parental love—
It is his *free gift*, according to his *own good pleasure*—
It is accompanied with a *divine efficacy* to the souls of men—
It operates on us, not enthusiastically, but in a *rational manner*—
It is called *Truth* in opposition to *falsehood*.
It is *not erroneous* like the religions of the Heathens—
It is *not unsatisfactory* and *uninteresting* like Philosophy—
It is *not transitory* as earthly things are—
It is the *accomplishment* of what existed only in *promises* before—
It is the *substance* of what was before exhibited in *types*—
It is the *completion* of what, under the law, was only *begun*—

The author of this gospel was *Jesus Christ*.
He like Moses was an *Interpreter* between God and men—
His ministry also, like Moses's, was accompanied with *miracles*—
He moreover caused his gospel to be *written* for a perpetual rule—

As such he was honoured infinitely above Moses.
Moses was only the *Dispenser* of the law, but Christ was the *Author* of grace and truth—
Moses did not *procure* the covenant of which he was the mediator; whereas the covenant of grace was given, not only *through* Christ, but *on his account*—
Moses could only *report* God's will to men; but Jesus Christ both reported it to them, and became a *Gaurantee* for their performance of it—
Moses was not the *source*, nor even the *dispenser* of the Spirit that accompanied the legal œconomy; but Christ communicates the Spirit out of *his own fullness*—
Moses wrought miracles by a *foreign* power; but Jesus Christ by *his own*—
Moses was established over *God's house* as a *servant;* but Jesus Christ as a *Son* (i. e. a Master and Heir) over *his own house*.

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* Take for example, 2 Cor. iv. 7. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," &c. The terms and subject are easy, yet on account of the importance of the matter, the passage must be extensively proposed.

I. The apostle's *proposition*, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels."

§ 12. Observe, farther, there are *two* sorts of expli-

1. What is the *treasure?* It is the *gospel of Christ;* and so called,

On account of its *worth* and excellence.

Because of its *abundance.*

For its *truth* and reality.

Because it cannot be *possessed* without joy, jealousy, caution, &c.

Because in the context it is called *light, glory, knowledge*—of God.

It is deposited in the hands of *ministers.*

It is a treasure in *all* who enjoy it; but most in *ministers;* especially as the *apostles* possessed it. In all its *extent, degrees,* and *purity.*

It is a treasure in opposition to the false *treasures of the earth.*

It was once hid in God's decrees, but is now *displayed.*

2. But this treasure is as in *earthen vessels.*

The passage probably *alludes* to Gideon's pitchers and lamps.

The word in *angels* was in *precious* vessels.

When God revealed it *himself,* it was *without* vessels.

When God declared himself by the *son, moon,* &c. it was in vessels of *grandeur.*

The apostles are *vessels;* not authors of the gospel, but *instruments.*

They were *earthen* vessels, for the *meanness* of their conditions.

For the *afflictions* to which they were subject.

In regard to their own *infirmities.*

Yet the apostles wisely *magnified their office* for their *treasure,* while they humbled and, as it were, *annihilated themselves,* calling themselves *earthen vessels.*

II. The *reason* assigned. "That the excellency of the power," &c.

1. The *excellency of the power* of the gospel. This consists,

In the happy *success* of the gospel in the *conversion* of men.

There is a *divine virtue* in the doctrine of the gospel to humble, comfort, instruct, exhilarate, embolden, &c.

Miracles accompanied the preaching of the apostles.

The *energy of the Holy Ghost* accompanied the preaching of the *gospel.*

2. The *end* that God proposed: "That this power might *appear to be of him,* and not of men."

Men are inclined to ascribe all effects to *second* causes.

Thus the *Heathens* worshipped and served the creature more than God the Creator.

The *Lycaonians* would fain have sacrificed to Paul and Barnabas.

The *Jews,* who should have known better, were disposed to ascribe undue power to Peter and John.

And *John himself* was surprised by this inclination, when he fell prostrate before the angel.

We see the same spirit in the *church of Rome.*

God therefore, took this method, in order to *stem* this torrent, and to *preclude* such abuses.

cations. The first is simple, and plain, and needs only to be *proposed*, and enlivened with clear and agreeable elucidations. The other must not only be stated and explained, but they must also be confirmed by sufficient evidence. Sometimes a text speaks of a *fact*, which can be confirmed only by proofs of fact:[*] sometimes it is a matter of *right*, that must be established by proofs of right:[†] and sometimes it is a subject made up of *both*, fact and right, and consequently proofs of right, as well as proofs of fact, must be adduced.[‡]

In discussing this text, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth;" after you have proposed in a few words the apostle's doctrine, it ought to be confirmed, as well by proofs of fact, which make it plain, that God has always been pleased to observe this method, as by proofs of right, which shew that he does thus with a great deal of wisdom. You will meet with an almost infinite number of texts of this nature.

Besides, their *meanness* contributed to *display* the glory of the *divine power*.

Never did the power of Jesus Christ appear more, than when he subjugated principalities and powers, and triumphed over them by the ministry of the cross. These *earthen vessels* triumphed over the whole world with the sound of their voice. Idols fell; temples were demolished; oracles were struck dumb; the people flocked in crowds to adore Jesus Christ. It is not enough to say, "This is *the finger of God;*" we must rather exclaim, "This is the "out-stretched *arm of the Lord.*" CLAUDE.

[*] For instance, Phil. ii. 6. "Jesus Christ being in the form of God," &c.

I. Explain the *terms*, "form of God," &c.
II. Produce proofs of *fact*.

[†] Thus Phil. ii. 14, 15. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings," &c.

I. *Explain* the vices and virtues.
II. *Confirm* the exhortation by reasons of *right*.

[‡] Thus also Phil. ii. 7. "Jesus Christ made himself of no reputation," &c.

I. explain the subject.
II. Prove it: by shewing,
  1. That the fact *is*, as St. Paul says.
  . That it *ought to be*, as it is, by reasons taken from the wisdom of God, &c.

There are sometimes texts of explication, in which we are obliged to explain some one great and important article consisting of many branches. As for example, predestination; and efficacious, converting grace. In this case you may either reduce the matter to a certain number of *propositions*, and discuss them one after another; or you may reduce them to a certain number of *questions*, and discuss them in like manner: but you ought (choose which way you will) to take particular care not to lay down any proposition, or any question, which is not formally contained in your text, or which does not follow by a near and easy consequence, for otherwise you would discuss the matter in a commonplace way.

Above all, take care to arrange your propositions well, when you take this method. Place the most general first, and follow the order of our knowledge, so that the first propositions may serve as steps to the second, the second to the third, and so of the rest.*

§ 13. Sometimes, what you have to explain in a text will consist of one or more *simple terms;* sometimes in certain ways of speaking *peculiar* to scripture, or at least of such great importance, that they will deserve to be particularly weighed and explained; sometimes in *particles*; which they call *syncategorematica;* and sometimes in propositions. For example, *simple terms* are, the divine attributes, goodness, mercy, wisdom, &c. The virtues of men, faith, hope, love, &c. Their vices and passions, ambition, avarice, vengeance, wrath, &c. In short, simple terms are single words, and they are either *proper* or *figurative*. In order to explain *figurative* words, you must give the meaning of the figure in a few words: and without stopping long upon the figure, pass to the thing itself. And in general observe this rule, *never insist long on a simple term, unless it be absolutely necessary;* for to aim at exhausting, as it were, and saying all that can be said, on a single word, is imprudent in a preacher, especially when there are many important matters in the text to be explained.*

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* *Arrange your propositions well.* Nothing elucidates a subject more than a conformity to this rule. CICERO's three words are well known, *aptè, distinctè, ornate.*

Sometimes there are simple terms, of which you must only take notice cursorily, and *en passant*, as it were, just as they relate to the intention of the sacred author. For example, in St. Paul's ordinary salutation, "Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ," it must not be imagined, that each of the terms or phrases must be considered *ex professo*, either *grace* or *peace*, or *God the Father*, or *Jesus Christ*, but the whole text is to be considered as a *salutation*, a benediction, an introduction to the epistle, and in these views make necessary remarks on the terms.†

In one word, take care to explain simple terms as much as possible, in relation to the present *design* of the sacred author, and the circumstances of the text; for by these means you will avoid common places, and say proper and agreeable things.

Sometimes you will meet with texts, the simple terms of which must be discussed professedly; and in order to give a clear and full view of the subject, you must give a clear and distinct idea of the terms.‡

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* A preacher should ground every discourse upon some evident principle; and from that draw the most obvious and natural consequences. FENELON'S *Letter to the French Academy.* § 4.

† Example, Phil. iii. 18, 19. "Many walk of whom I have told you often," &c.

I. The *manner* of St. Paul's address "I have told you often, and now tell you weeping."

II. The *matter* of it. It is a description of bad people and bad ministers.

1. They are enemies of the cross of Christ.
2. Their end is destruction.
3. Their God is their belly.
4. They glory in their shame.
5. They mind earthly things. *Daillè.*

‡ For example, 1 Tim. i. 5. "Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart," &c. Divide the text into three parts:

I. What this commandment is.

When there are many simple terms in a text, you

The term is sometimes put for the *moral law*, because of its *natural* authority, and that of its *Legislator.*

Also for the *preaching of the gospel*, as the term (παραγγελια) may signify; hence the *necessity* of preaching the word, and the *benefit* of it—

And in general for *the true religion*—because,

1. It is not an indifferent thing, but a *necessary obligation*—

2. Religion in all its parts ought to proceed from God—

II. Its *end*, which is *charity.*

1. What is this *charity* or *love?*

The *principal object* of our love is *God;* to an union with whom the soul elevates itself by various emotions.

This *love* makes God *reign* over us in a manner worthy of himself—

He reigns over all creatures by Influence, Providence, and Justice—

When we give our love to creatures, withdrawing it from God, it *insults* God, and *injures* ourselves—

Love to creatures, so disproportionate, begets numberless *inconveniences*—

The *second object* of our love is our *neighbour.*

This is not inconsistent with supreme love to God, if we distinguish *different times*—

When we are empty, and incapable of imparting good, we must love *only God.*—

When united to God, we may love the creature, and impart what we have received—

There is a *difference* between the two *emotions*, to God and creatures—

One is first, original, and independent—

The other subordinate, independent, a reflection of the first—

2. How this love is the *end of the commandment.*

Love is the end of the *moral law.*

All our offences proceed from the want or imperfection of this virtue—

This is the *general virtue*, giving to all others their motion, action, and value.

Love tends to render God an amiable object—

Love is the end of *preaching the gospel.*

That the hearts of men may be won to God, and united together—

This is implied in our communion with Christ, under the image of a body of which he is the head—

Love is the end of *religion in general.*

Every thing in religion is a motive to love God.

The end of *civil* society is to satisfy the *self-love* of each individual—

But the end of *christian* society is unbounded benevolence—

must consider, whether it would not be more proper to treat of them *comparatively* with each other, than to discuss them separately, or each apart; for sometimes it would be very injudicious to discuss them separately, and very agreeable to do it by *comparison*.*

III. The *principles* from which this love ought to proceed.

1. A pure heart.

A heart sincere and honest, opposed to double and hypocritical—
A *feigned* love is hatred under the veil of friendship—
Sincere love must be independent on self-love—
A heart *sanctified* and disengaged from all vice and uncleanness—
This distinguishes it from that *idolatrous love* which false religions inspire—
And from *worldly friendship*, or the associations of vice—
A heart uniform and well regulated, as opposed to perplexed and embarrassed—

2. A *good conscience*.

This differs but little from a *pure heart*—
It is to love God *sincerely*, without scrupulosity, fraud, hypocrisy, a mixture of interest, and dependence on self-love—
So to love God as to be able to assure ourselves that we do love him—

3. *Faith unfeigned*.

This implies that faith is the *parent* of this love—
It is from the *belief* we have of God's love to us, that this love arises in our hearts to God and man—
The scripture teaches the ineffable abundance, and admirable fruits of God's love to us.
Faith is incomparably superior to the imperfect light of nature—
But this faith must be *unfeigned*, true and lively—

CLAUDE.

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* For example, Luke ii. 8—11. "And there were in the same country shepherds," &c. Let this text be divided into two parts:

I. The *appearance* of the angel to the shepherds, with all the circumstances which the history remarks.

It is needless curiously to enquire who these shepherds were—
And who the angel, or why he came to *these* shepherds—

1. This meeting was however by the order of *Providence*—
God causes his grace to descend not only upon the great and powerful of the world, but also on the most simple and inconsiderable: as the heavens diffuse their influence—
It seems as if God took more pleasure in bestowing his favours on the *most abject*—
In this meeting of the angel and shepherds we see a perpetual character of *the economy of Christ*, which joins the *highest* and *lowest*—
This mission intimates the *end* of Christ's mission; to make peace, and establish communion between heaven and earth—

§ 14. Having spoken of simple terms, I proceed to

As to the *time*, probably it was not the 25th of December—

But this is not material: However, while these shepherds were busy in their *calling*, God sent his angel to them—

God does in regard to men what these shepherds did in regard to their sheep—

2. *The glory of the Lord* shone around the shepherds.

Angels have always appeared with some *ensigns of grandeur*—

This glory appearing in the night may be taken for a *mystical symbol.*

The angel appeared to the shepherds when they neither *expected* nor thought of such a favour—

4. The shepherds were seized with great *fear.*

This was an effect of their great *surprise*—

It also arose from emotions of *conscience*—

Angels had formerly been the ministers of God's *vengeance*—

But *joy* presently succeeded their fear.

II. The angel's *message* or *discourse* to the shepherds.

To gain their attention, the angel says to them, *Fear not.*

Then announces the great and mysterious news of the Redeemer's birth—

The word "*Behold*" denotes the importance of the subject—

1. He describes the *person* of whom he speaks.

Observe the three titles *in general.* A *Saviour, Christ,* the *Lord.*

He means to describe the *Messiah*—

From him the Jews expected deliverance—

A Saviour, on account of a heavenly and eternal salvation—

This name distinguishes his mission from that of Moses—

Christ, the *Messiah,* or *anointed,* filled with the graces of the Holy Spirit, vested with glorious dignity and supreme authority—

Sovereign, Prophet, Priest, and King of his church—

Lord (Κυριος) expresses, according to the Septuagint, the ineffable name of God—

He is truly *Lord,* if we consider the *justice* of his rights, the *extent* of his empire, the *power* of his government, and the *end* of his reign.

Observe these three titles in *a comparative* view.

Compare with *each other;* in the title *Saviour* he shews the *end* of Christ's coming into the world; in that of *Christ,* the *right* he had to undertake so great a work; and in that of *Lord,* the sovereign *power,* with which he should execute it—

Compared with *the other parts of the text;* a *Saviour,* to justify the *great joy* brought; *Christ,* with relation to his birth in the city of David; *Lord,* a reason for bringing the glad tidings, because he is Lord of all, both yours and ours.

Compare with *what follows;* to guard the shepherds against their being offended with future appearances—

2. *What* he says about him is, "He is born unto you."

add something concerning *expressions peculiar to scripture.* These deserve a particular explication, and should be discussed and urged with great diligence, as well because they are peculiar modes of speaking, as because they are rich with meaning. In this class I put such forms of speaking as these.—To be in Christ Jesus.—To come to Jesus Christ.—To come after Jesus Christ.—To live in the flesh.—To live after the flesh.—From faith to faith.—From glory to glory.—To walk after the flesh—To walk after the Spirit.—The old man.—The new man.—Jesus Christ lives in you.—To live to Jesus Christ.—To live to ourselves.—To die to the world.—To die to ourselves.—To be crucified to the world.—The world to be crucified to us.—Jesus Christ made sin for us, we made the righteousness of God in him.—Christ put to death in the flesh, quickened by the Spirit.—Die unto sin.—Live unto righteousness.—Quench the Spirit.—Grieve the Spirit.—Resist the Holy Ghost.—Sin against the Holy Ghost:—and I know not how many more such expressions, which are found almost no where but in scripture.

Whenever you meet with such forms of speech as these, you must not pass them over lightly, but you must fully explain them, entering well into the spirit and meaning of them. It would be very convenient for

The Son of God, out of pure love to us, became the Son of man—
He condescended to suffer our weaknesses—
The Messiah was not born for himself; *to you he is born*—
He was born not for *angels*, but for *us*—
3. The angel after this mentions the *time* of this happy birth.
It is both difficult and needless to fix it precisely—
It was in the reign of *Augustus*, a little before the death of Herod the Great—
At the time appointed by prophecy, a little before *the sceptre's departure*—
When the people seemed unworthy of any remembrance—
4. He mentions the *place* of Christ's birth; *the city of David.*
There David *was* born, and there Micah declared Christ *should* be born—
5. He specifies the *nature* of this important news, "I bring you," &c.
Joy was the first fruit of Christ's entrance into the world—
But this is a *public* and *general joy*— .CLAUDE.

a young man to procure, for this purpose, an exact collection, and endeavour to inform himself of the sense of each.*

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* Example, Mark viii. 34. "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself," &c.

Methinks it would not be improper to divide a sermon from these words into two parts: First, the *expressions* used; second, the entire *sense* of the *whole proposition.*

I. The *expressions* which Jesus uses, "Come after me," &c.

To *come after* Jesus Christ signifies, in general, *to be his disciples.*

Particularly,

1. That we take from him our light and *knowledge*, as he speaks to us on God's part, and we are commanded to hear him—
2. That we yield all kinds of service and *obedience* to him, as our sovereign Lord—
3. That we *concur with him*, and under him, in one and the same *design*—
4. That we *imitate* the great and admirable examples of virtue, which he hath left us both in his life and death—
5. To which may be added, *expecting to receive benefits*—

To deny himself, is an expression that seems to shock reason; but is truly reasonable, and intends,

1. To *renounce* all that is in us *excessive*, vicious and irregular.
2. All violent, immoderate and excessive *love* of ourselves.
3. He means, that we should change the very *nature* of that love we used to have for ourselves—
4. We should renounce the false and perverse *pretence* of being our own masters, and submit ourselves to God—

To take up his cross, is an expression, though not exclusively scriptural, yet consecrated to a sacred purpose; and intends,

1. The mystical cross of *conversion.*

Sin and carnal lust are made to *die* within our hearts—

This death cannot be affected without *pain*, sensible and violent—

The crucified become objects of *reproach* to the world—

2. The cross of *afflictions.*

Not only nature suffers, but also, by these means we become the reproach of the world—

To *follow* Jesus Christ is,

1. To *believe* his doctrine—
2. To *imitate* his example—
3. To *profess openly* our subjection to him—

II. The *entire sense* of the *whole* proposition.

1. He means, if we would be really his disciples, we must submit to *sanctification.*

It is impossible to belong to Christ, without forsaking sin—

Grace conducts to *glory*, only by means of *holiness*—

To destroy sin was the end of Christ's coming into the world—

2. We must, if the disciples of Jesus Christ, submit to *affliction.*

§ 15. We have before observed, that, beside simple terms, and singular expressions peculiar to scripture, there are also sometimes in texts *particles*, that are called *syncategorematica*, which serve either for the augmentation or limitation of the meaning of the proposition. As the word *so* in John iii. 16. "God *so* "loved the world."—The word *now* in Rom. viii. 1. "There is therefore *now* no condemnation to them, which are in Christ Jesus;"—and in many other passages of the same kind. Whenever you meet with these terms, carefully examine them, for sometimes the greatest part, and very often the whole of the explication, depends upon them.

Sometimes these terms in question are not of consequence enough to be much dwelt on; but may be more properly passed with a slight remark. The word *Behold*, with which many propositions in scripture begin, must be treated so; you must not make one part of this, nor insist on it too long. The same may be said of that familiar expression of Jesus Christ, *Verily*, *Verily*, which is an asseveration, or, if you will, an oath: but neither on this must you insist much. So again, *Amen*, or *so be it*, which closes some texts: *Woe be to you*, which Jesus Christ often repeats in the gospel, with many more of the same kind. I know no certain rule to distinguish when they are important: but it must be left to the preacher's taste; and a little attention will make the necessary discernment very easy.

§ 16. When the matter to be explained in a text consists of a *proposition*, you must,

This is a truth in *fact*.
  All the great servants of God are *examples* of it—
  The *whole history* of the church shews it was nourished and increased in afflictions—
There are good *reasons* for this dispensation of providence.
  By means of afflictions God *restrains our impetuous passions*—
  And *exercises our virtues*, faith, patience, &c.—
  Afflictions tend to *detach us from the world*—
  And elevate us to the *hope of a better life*—
  God, by these means, *displays the glory* of his providence—
  And confers on us the *honour* of being conformed to Jesus Christ—

CLAUDE.

1. *Give the sense* clearly and neatly, taking care to develope it of all sorts of ambiguity.*

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* Example, Eph. i. 18. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened," &c.

This text may be divided into *two* parts, The apostle's *prayer;* and the *end* of this illumination.

I. The apostle's prayer, "May God enlighten the eyes of your understanding;"

Which contains a *proposition,* 'that it is God who enlightens the eyes of our understanding,' which must be explained.

Scripture frequently borrows the names and images of corporeal faculties to represent those of the soul—

The *eyes of the understanding,* here, must denote the faculty by which we know and judge objects, i. e the understanding—

The *eyes* have two uses; the one, to view objects indifferently—

The other, in order to conduct and regulate our actions—

Thus it is with the *understanding;* it is used for *speculative* and *practical* knowledge.

Here the understanding is spoken of in the *latter* sense—

The mysteries of the gospel are proposed to us, not for our *diversion,* but for *practice.*

The proposition must be not only explained, but also *proved.*

1. *Indirectly.*

Scripture represents the natural depravity, and inability of man to convert himself, to be very great. *Heart of stone.—Ethiopian skin, &c.*

To which may be added, for *illustration,* that our attachment to the world is such as supernatural grace alone can dissolve.

2. In a more *direct* way. By passages which formally ascribe to God our conversion—

We may also argue, divine wisdom determines that our regeneration should be all heavenly, to the exclusion of natural principles—

The new man, being the pure work of the Holy Spirit, resembles Christ in *all* things—

They who are Christ's, are predestinated to be conformed to his image—

And *are born, not of blood, &c but of God*—

Which may be further *illustrated,* by the numerous *examples* of conversions—

Or, by comparing conversion to the work of creation—

Or, by the greatness of the *change* wrought in men—

Or, by the *person who proposes* the doctrine, &c.

II. The *end* of this illumination. "That you may know what is the hope of his calling," &c.

The proposition is, That by the illumination of grace, we understand the innumerable blessings of the gospel; which includes divers truths, that must be distinguished from each other.

2. If it be requisite, shew how *important*, in religion, it is to be acquainted with the truth in hand, and for this purpose open its connection with other important truths; and its dependence on them; the inconveniences that arise from negligence; the advantageous succours which piety derives thence, with other things of the same nature.

3. Having placed it in a clear light, and shewn its importance, if it require confirmation, *confirm* it. In all cases endeavour to *illustrate* either by *reasons* or *examples*, or *comparisons* of the subjects with each other, or by remarking their *relation* to each other, or by shewing their *conformities*, or *differences;* all with a view to illustrate the matter you are discussing. You may also illustrate a proposition by its *consequences*, by shewing how many important inferences are included in it, and flow from it.

You may beautify a proposition by its *evidence*, by shewing, that the truth of which you speak, is discover-

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1. The gospel is a *divine vocation;* "Awake thou that sleepest," &c.
   The church is not a tumultuous assembly, &c. but a society which has God for its author—
2. A vocation in which God proposes something to our *hope*.
   Not a vocation of mere *authority*, much less of *seduction* to sin—
   But like that to Abraham; or to Lazarus—
3. This call proposes to our hopes an *Inheritance*—
   Not a recompence proportioned to our merit—
   But a good bestowed in virtue of adopting grace—
4. This inheritance is a *heavenly* one; (*εν τοις αγιοις*) *in holy*, or *heavenly places*—
   The apostle intends, not only the *nature* of the divine blessings, but also the *place* of possessing them—
5. These are blessings of infinite *abundance*, of inexpressible value—
   "Riches of the glory;" a way of speaking proper to the Hebrews, and often used—
6. The apostle would have us *know* the admirable greatness of this hope—
   All our deviations, and wrong attachments, arise from our ignorance of this glory—
7. The knowledge we have of this matter comes from *divine Illumination.*

CLAUDE.

able by the light of nature, or by its *inevidence*, observing, that it is not discoverable by the light of nature, but is a pure doctrine of revelation.

In fine, you may illustrate by the *person*, who *proposes* the subject; by the *state*, in which he was, when he proposed it; by the persons *to whom* it is proposed; by *circumstances* of *time* and *place*, &c. All these may give great openings: but they must be judiciously and discreetly used; for to attempt to make an assemblage of all these in the discussion of one proposition, would be trifling, endless, and pedantic.

Sometimes one single proposition *includes many truths*, which it will be necessary to distinguish: but in doing this take care that each truth, on which you intend to insist, be of some importance in religion, not too common, not too much known. This your own good sense must discern.

Sometimes one proposition must be discussed in the *different views* in which it may be taken; and in this case you must remark those different relations.*

Sometimes the doctrine contained in the proposition has different *degrees*, which it will also be necessary to remark.†

Sometimes the proposition is *general*, and this generality seems to make it of little importance. In this case you must examine whether some of its parts be not more considerable; if they be, you will be obliged to discuss these parts by a particular application.‡

§ 17. Some texts require a discussion by way of consideration, or *observation*. The following hints may serve for a general direction.

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* As, Psal. lxix. 21. "They gave me gall for my meat," &c. ——Also, Psal. cxxix. 2. "Many a time have they afflicted me," &c.

† Example, Exod. iii. 7, 8. "And the Lord said, I have surely seen," &c.——In like manner, Heb. ii. 13. "Behold me, and the children," &c. Ezek. xxxvii.

‡ Example, Psal. xxxvii. 3. "Inhabit the land." So again, Prov. xv. 3. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place," &c.

I. A providential knowledge *regulating*.
II. A knowledge of *approbation* and *condemnation*.
III. A knowledge of *protection* and *chastisement*.

1. When texts are *clear* of themselves, and the matter well known to the *hearers*, it would be trifling to amuse the people with *explication*. Such texts must be taken as they are, that is, clear, plain, and evident, and only observations should be made on them.

2. Most *historical* texts must be discussed in this way; for in a way of explication there would be very little to say.

3. There are some texts, which require *both* explication and observation, as when *some parts* may need explaining. For example, Acts i. 10. "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold! two men stood by them in white apparel." Here it will be necessary to *explain*, in a few words, the cause of their "looking stedfastly toward heaven:" for, by lifting their eyes after their divine Master, they expressed the inward emotions of their minds. It will be needful also to *explain* this other expression, "as he went up;" and to *observe*, that it must be taken in its plain, popular sense; and that it signifies not merely the removal of his visible presence, while he remained invisibly upon earth; but the absolute absence of his humanity. This is the natural sense of the words, and the observation is necessary to guard us against that sense, which the church of Rome imposes on them for the sake of transubstantiation.*

Observe, in general, when explication and observation meet in one text, you must always explain the part that needs explaining, *before* you make any observations; for observations must not be made, till you have plainly and clearly established the sense.

4. Sometimes an *observation* may be made *by way of explication*, as when you would infer something important from the meaning of an original term in the text. For example, Acts ii. 1. "And when the day of

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* And in which the church of *Rome* is joined by some *modern reformers*, but for different *ends*.

Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord, in one place." It will be proper here to explain and enforce the Greek word, ομοθυμαδον, which is translated, *with one accord*, for it signifies, that they had the same hope, the same opinions, the same judgment; and thus their unanimity is distinguished from an exterior and negative agreement, which consists in a mere profession of having no different sentiments, and in not falling out: but this may proceed from negligence, ignorance, or fear of a tyrannical authority.

5. Observations, for the most part, ought to be *theological*, that is to say, they should belong to a system of religion. Sometimes, indeed, we may make use of observations historical, philosophical, critical: but these should be used sparingly, and seldom, on necessary occasions, and when they cannot well be avoided; and even then they ought to be pertinent, and not common, that they may be heard with satisfaction. Make it a LAW, to be generally very brief on observations of these kinds, and to inform your audience, that you only make them *en passant*.

There are, I allow, some cases, in which observations remote from theology are necessary to the elucidating of a text. When these happen, make your observations *professedly*, and explain and prove them. But, I repeat it again, in general, observations should be purely theological; either speculative, which regard the mysteries of christianity, or practical, which regard morality: for the pulpit was erected to instruct the minds of men in religious subjects, and not to gratify curiosity; to inflame the heart, and not find play for imagination.

6. Observations should not be proposed in *scholastic* style, nor in *common-place* form.* They should be sea-

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* Many sermons of the last century are mere common-place collections. One example shall suffice. Bishop Ward, in his funeral sermon for the Duke of Albermarle, from 1 Cor. xv. 57, observes: "The gospel tells us, That God hath appointed a *day*, wherein he will judge the world.—That *Christ* is ordained of God to be *judge*, both of quick and dead—That he shall come *in the clouds*—That he shall send his *angels*—That he shall sit on the

soned with a sweet urbanity,* accommodated to the capacities of the people, and adapted to the manners of good men. One of the best expedients for this purpose is a reduction of obscure matters to a natural, popular, modern air. You can never attain this ability, unless you acquire a habit of conceiving clearly of subjects yourself, and of expressing them in a free, familiar, easy manner, remote from every thing forced, and far-fetched.†

7. Care, however, must be taken to avoid the opposite extreme, which consists in making only poor, dry, spiritless observations; frequently said under pretence of avoiding school-divinity, and of speaking *only popular* things. Endeavour to think *clearly;* and try also to think *nobly*. Let your observations be replete with beauty, as well as propriety, the fruits of improved fancy, under the direction of a sober judgment.

§ 18. To open more particularly some sources of observations, remark every thing that may help you to think, and facilitate invention.

1. *Rise from species to genus*. Thus, for example,

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throne of his glory.—That all nations shall be gathered—Christ hath *assured* the world of the *truth* of this *theory*. Not by giving the world a *set* and *series* of *imaginary principles* of vain philosophy—Not by *bare assertions*, and *confident repetitions*—Not by *phantastical, obscure* ratiocinations, concerning *numbers, vehicles*.'—— In this naked manner, as boys string birds' eggs, did this divine connect the parts of his sermon. Rob.

* *Urbanity* is opposed to *rusticity*, and that of which our author speaks, regards both the *subject* itself, and the *language*, in which it is expressed. In short, if urbanity be not in the *preacher*, it will never be in his *sermons*. Rob.

† Ministers who aim at this excellence, should remember, that there is such a thing as being *too familiar*. As to an *easy* manner also, there are two extremes. The formal *stiffness* of a pedant, and the *carelessness* of a man who does not respect his company, are both at a distance from Mr. Claude's *ease*. The ease of the *manner* of a christian preacher, in the pulpit, is not the ease of a man when *alone*, but of a well-bred man in *company*.

A subject is *far-fetched*, when, although it may have some connection with the text, yet this connection lies at a great distance, and obliges the preacher to go a long, long way to come at it. Rob.

you may quit the *specific* idea, in Psal. l. 14. "Sacrifice unto God thanksgiving," in favour of the *general* one, the dignity of sacrifice.*

2. *Descend from genus to species.* An example may be taken from Psal. cxxiii. 2. "Behold! as the eyes of servants look unto the *hands* of their masters, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God." Here, you may aptly observe in masters with regard to servants, and in God with regard to us, three senses of the phrase. There is a hand of *beneficence*, a hand of *protection*, or deliverance, and a hand of *correction.*† The application of these to the servants of God is easy.

You will meet with a great number of texts which may be discussed in this manner: but great care must be taken not to strain the subject; for that would make you look like a school-boy. The best way is to make only one general observation, and then to apply it to several particular subjects, collecting all at last into one general point of view.‡

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* Thus also, John vii. 27. *We know this man, whence he is, &c.* An excellent preacher takes this text, and treats of *infidelity in general.* The text says nothing of disbelieving the being of a God, or the mission of Moses; but the preacher goes from the particular ideas of the *text*, to the *general subject*, and observes:—That a depraved heart offers objections against religion, without venturing to believe them—That ignorance adopts them without understanding them—That the whole system of infidelity is a vain bravado, devoid of every degree of consolation. These three observations are the parts of the discourse.

MASSILON *Serm. Carême.* Tom. iv. ROB.

† *Our eyes wait, until the Lord have mercy on us.* This is the language of a servant, under just *correction* for his faults, and penitently waiting for forgiveness. See Isa. ix. 13. and POL. *Synops. in loc.*

‡ Thus a general truth may be applied to particular *persons—times—places—circumstances, &c.* For instance; Psal. cxliv. 15. "Happy is the people," &c. These general truths, applicable to *any nation,* are applied by Bp. BURNET, in the most beautiful manner, to the *English* nation. Thanksgiv. Serm. before House of Com. for the Revol. 1688.——Thus Gal. vi. 2. "Bear ye one another's burdens," &c. This *general* exhortation is justly and beautifully applied, by Dr. SNAPE, to the relief of the *City-Hospitals.*——Again, Matt. iv. 1. "Then was Jesus led," &c. Instead of speaking of temptations in *general*, a sermon preached to the

3. *Remark the divers* CHARACTERS *of a virtue*, which is commended; *or of a vice*, which is forbidden; as of true love to God, avarice, &c.*

4. *Observe the* RELATION *of one subject to another.* For example, always when in scripture God is called *a Father*, the relation of that term to *children* is evident, and we are obliged not only to remark the paternal inclinations, which are in God towards us, and the ad-

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clergy of the diocese of Clermont, runs only on temptations to *ambition* in particular, to which *clergymen* are exposed. MASSILON. Before a preacher descends to *particular* ideas, he should take care to prove, that the *general* idea is in his text, otherwise he will build on the sand. ROB.

* For example, 2 Thess. iii. 5. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." Begin with the *characters* of true *love* to God.—The seat of it is the *heart*—it possesses the *whole* heart—and though it is not alone, it holds the *chief place*—its emotions and acts are *infinite*, without measure or subordination; without bounds or partition—but *sets bounds* to every emotion towards other objects—is accompanied with *humanity* and *fear*—principally consists in *obedience*—is inflamed under the rod of *correction*—and is not *superstitious*.—It is tranquil and *peaceable*—yet always *active*—and finally, one of the greatest evidences of love to God is, *spontaneous* obedience, not waiting for chastisements to awake us, after we have fallen into sin. So much for the *characters* of love.

Then subjoin the *emotions* included in the words, "patient waiting." On which, remark, That the coming of Jesus Christ being the subject in question, the expectation of a believer is a true and real *hope*—accompanied with an holy and ardent *desire*, as being an expectation of the greatest blessings—and an *holy inquietude*, almost like what we feel when we expect an intimate friend—but this inquietude does not hinder us from *possessing our souls in patience*—and finally, it necessarily includes a holy preparation.

You might easily take the characters of *vices* from this pattern of characterizing virtues; however, I will add an example on *avarice*. Heb. xiii. 5. "Let your conversation be without covetousness," &c.—Avarice is a disposition so gross, that it *obscures* the understanding and *reason* of a man—renders him *useless* to *society*—nay, it even makes him hurtful and *pernicious* to it—hence it is *incompatible* with true faith, and *with the genius of christianity*.—It is not without reason, that St. Paul calls avarice *idolatry*: it is not money, in effect, that the covetous adore—it is surprising to see in what manner all the other inclinations of a miser, good and bad, obey his avarice—in fine, his avarice gives the colour and tint to *every subject*. CLAUDE.

vantages which we receive from his love; but also the duties to which we are bound, as children of such a Father. The same may be said of all these expressions of scripture, God is *our God*, we are *his people*—he is our *portion*, we are his *heritage*—he is our *master*, we are his *servants*—he is our *king*, we are the *subjects* of his kingdom—he is our *prophet*, or teacher, we are his *disciples*—with many more of the same kind. When we meet with such single and separate, they must be discussed in relation to one another, and this relation must be particularly considered: but, when these relative things are discussed, great care must be taken neither to insist on them too much; nor to descend to mean ideas; nor even to treat of them one after another in form of a parallel: for nothing is more tiresome, than treating these apart, and one after another. They must, then, be associated together; a body composed of many images must be formed, and the whole must be always animated with the sensible and the spiritual.

5. *Observe whether some things be not* SUPPOSED, *which are not expressed.* This is a source of invention different from the former, for the former is confined to things really relative; but this speaks in general of things *supposed*, which have no relation to each other. For example, when we speak of a change, what they call *terminus a quo* necessarily supposes the *terminus ad quem:* and the *terminus ad quem* supposes the *terminus a quo.*

A covenant supposes two contracting parties—a reconciliation effected, or peace made, supposes war and enmity—a victory supposes enemies, arms, and a combat—life supposes death, and death life—the day supposes night, and the night day. It is always very important to understand well what things are supposed in the text; for sometimes several useful considerations may be drawn from them, and not unfrequently the very expressions in the text include them.*

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* For example; Rom. xii. 17. "Recompense to no man evil for evil." Here may very properly be observed the truths which are *supposed* in the words—The *disorder* into which sin has thrown

§ 19. It remains that you take care in treating supposed truths,

1. Not to *fetch* them too *far*, and to bring them about by long circuits of reasoning. Avoid this for two reasons; first, because you would render your discourse *obscure* by it; for every body is not capable of seeing truths, which are very distant from the text; and, secondly, because by this means you might bring in *all* the whole body of divinity into your text; which attempt would be vicious, and contrary to good sense. Of supposed truths, you must choose the most *natural*, and those which lie nearest the text.*

2. Do not *enlarge* on implied truths; it is proper, indeed, that hearers should know them; but they are not principal articles.

3. Take care also that these supposed things be *important*, either for instruction in general, or for casting light particularly on the text, or for consolation, or for the correction of vice, or practice of piety, or some useful purpose; otherwise you would deliver trifling impertinencies under the name of implied truths.

§ 26. 6. *Reflect on the* PERSON *speaking or acting*.†

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mankind—faith, and the dignity of a christian calling, do not raise the *disciple* of *Christ* above injuries—the gospel not only forbids resentment and revenge; it even commands us to *pardon* offences, obligeth us to *do good* to our enemies, to *pray* for our persecutors. CLAUDE.

* Thus Bishop FLETCHER, in a sermon concerning the rich man, who said, Luke xii. 18. "I will pull down my barns," &c. 'The rich man does not propose to employ his fortune in *faction* —he does not intend to increase his estate by incroaching on his neighbours—nor to get richer by extortion and *usury*—he does not mean to trouble and *persecute* good people, who do not live as he doth—nor does he design to give himself up to sordid *avarice*, or to ostentation and *pomp*—only, *Soul, take thine ease*.' ROB.

† ERASMUS enlarges on this article, which includes family—country—sex—age—education—body, as beautiful or deformed, strong or weak—fortune—condition—mental abilities—particular studies—connections—conduct—name—&c. ERAS. *De Ratione concionandi*. Lib ii.

SAURIN, takes *this topic*, in a sermon on our Lord's prayer on the cross for his executioners, Luke xxiii. 34. "Father forgive them," &c. 'The first pretext with which you cover your hatred

For example, let us take the last mentioned text of St. Paul, Rom. xii. 17. "Recompense to no man evil for evil." Here you may very pertinently remark,

1. That this precept is more beautiful in the mouth of St. Paul, than it could have been in that of any other man. The reason is this; he of all the men in the world had the greatest reason for resentment upon *worldly* principles; for never was there a man more persecuted, never a man more *unjustly* persecuted than he.

When *we* give such precepts to the worldly, they never fail to say to us, Yes, yes! you talk finely! you have never been insulted as we have! had you met with what we have, you would talk otherwise! But there is no reason to say so to St. Paul, any more than to Jesus Christ, his master, the author of this *divine morality*.

2. You may also very properly remark, that, to take a different view of the apostle Paul, no man was more

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and vengeance, is the dignity of the *offended*, and the littleness of the *offender*. I am the offended person! I who am a person of distinction!—Well!—You are offended!--You GRAND!—You SUPERB! You ILLUSTRIOUS! You are offended! One of these inferior *men*, or rather, in your account, one of these contemptible *insects*, on which you have the condescension to tread, has rashly presumed to look in your face, yea, to oppose an insolent obstacle against your supreme will!

But who is the pardoning JESUS? Who are the *men* whom he pardons, and whom he prays his Father to pardon? It is he whom God hath made *Lord and Christ;* it is he, in whose presence *every knee must bow*.—Yet all this real dignity on one part, and all imaginable meanness on the other, did not appear to Jesus Christ sufficient reasons for with-holding his love; his ideas of magnanimity were altogether different from yours.' SAUR. *Serm.* Tom. i. *Sur la Priere de Jesus Christ pour ses Bourreaux.*

The beauty of a great number of passages of scripture is highly set off, by reflecting on the *persons* whose words they are. Thus, —"All is vanity and vexation of spirit." Eccl. ii. 11. Who says so? A monk? No, the wisest, the richest, and the most industrious prince in the world—who had genius to invent, fortune to purchase, and industry to execute; who *built houses, planted vineyards, &c.*

Exod. v. "Moses told Pharoah, Thus saith the Lord." *Who* presumes to give language to God? A man to whom the Lord had spoken, iv. 1. &c. and a man empowered to prove his mission by miracles, iv. 30. *He gathered the elders—spoke the words—and did the signs.* ROB.

obliged to teach and love such a morality than *himself.* Why? Because all those, whom God, in his ineffable mercy, had called to the knowledge of the truth, he had been the most concerned in cruel efforts of rage against God and his church. Add to this, the apostle had not only met with pardoning love to an enemy, on *God's* part, but he had also experienced it from the *church.* Far from rendering him evil for evil, far from avenging his persecutions, the disciples of Christ reached out the arms of love to him, received him into their communion, and numbered him with the apostles of Jesus Christ.

7. *Reflect on the* STATE *of the person speaking or acting.* Thus in explaining 1 Thess. v. 16. "Rejoice evermore," you must not fail to consider the *state* of St. Paul, when he wrote that epistle; for he was at Athens, engaged in that superstitious city, where, as it is said in Acts xvii. his spirit was *stirred in him,* observing *the city wholly given to idolatry;* where he was treated as a *babbler, a setter forth of strange gods,* and where, in short, he was the object of the Athenian ridicule and raillery.* Yet, amid so many just causes of grief, he exhorts the Thessalonians always to preserve their spiritual joy. Not that he meant to render them insensible to the evils which he suffered, nor to the afflictions of the new-born church; but because our spiritual afflictions, I mean those which we suffer for the glory of God, and the good of his church, are not incompatible with peace and joy of conscience. On the contrary, it is particularly in these afflictions that God gives the

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* Pedantic academies are wonderfully adapted to *raillery,* and too often religion is the subject, being that with which they are least acquainted. Let *ridicule* be called what it will, it uses reason in a very buffoonish manner, when it usurps the throne of sober argument.

Rhetoricians make *six* sorts of irony. 1. *Sarcasm,* a dog like *insult.* 2. *Diasyrmus,* a *reproach.* 3. *Charientismus,* a *smoothing* joke. 4. *Asteismus,* a *polite* banter. 5. *Mycterismus,* a *turning up of the nose.* 6. *Mimesis,* a *mimicking.* Wisdom should be to wit, what the tutor is to his pupil. Thus it is in *Bradbury's* sermons, and the direct contrary in *South's.* ROB.

most lively joys, because then he bestows on his children more abundant measures of his grace, and more intimate communion with himself.

8. *Remark the* TIME *of a word or action.** For example, St. Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy, requires, that in the public services of the church, prayers should be made *for all men;* but "first for kings, and for those that are in authority." Here it is very natural to remark the *time*. It was when the church and the apostles were every where persecuted; when the faithful were the objects of the hatred and calumny of all mankind, and in particular of the cruelty of these tyrants. Yet none of this rough treatment could stop the course of christian charity.

9. *Observe* PLACE. St. Paul says to the Philippians, "Forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. iii. 14. The place where he writes this furnishes a very beautiful consideration. He was then in *prison*, at Rome, loaded with chains, and deprived of his liberty; yet he speaks as if he were as much at liberty as any man in the world. His prison was converted into an agreeable Stadium, and death for the gospel might well be considered under the image of a complete victory.

§. 21. 10. *Consider the* PERSONS ADDRESSED. Let us again take St. Paul's words for an example. "Recompense to no man evil for evil." Rom. xii. 17. They to whom the apostle addressed these words were Romans, whose perpetual maxim was, violently to revenge public injuries, and totally to destroy those who intended to destroy them, or had offered them any affronts; witness the Carthagenians and Corinthians. They totally destroyed Carthage, because she had carried her arms into Italy by Hannibal's means, and had been on the point of ruining Rome. Corinth they sacked and burnt, for having affronted their ambassadors. You may also remark this particular circumstance, that although the Romans had succeeded in avenging their injuries, and the empire owed its grandeur to such excesses, yet their success did not hinder the apostle from saying, "Recompense to no man evil for evil;" because neither examples nor successes ought to be the rules of our conduct, but solely the will of God and the law of Christianity.

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* They who read sermons composed by others are very often surprized into violations of *time*. And they who spend all their time in confuting *old errors*, believed formerly, but exploded now; or in stating, explaining, and establishing some *truths*, formerly denied, or doubted, or misunderstood, but now generally believed by their auditors; are inattentive to time, and are heard with disgust.

The doctrine of *time* is very important on the subject of *prophecies*—on that of *miracles*—*extraordinary gifts*—*dreams*—*visions*—*revelations*—*inspirations*, &c. ROB.

11. *Examine the* PARTICULAR STATE *of persons addressed.** For example, "Recompense to no man evil for evil." St. Paul writes to Romans; but to Roman *christians*, who saw themselves hated and persecuted by their fellow-citizens, and, in general, abused by the whole world. Yet, however reasonable resentment might appear at first sight, the apostle would not have them obey such passions as the light of reason, the instinct of nature, and the desire of their own preservation might seem to excite; he exhorted them to leave vengeance to God, and advised them only to follow the dictates of love. The greatest persecutors of the primitive christians were the Jews, on whom the Roman christians could easily have avenged themselves under various pretexts; for the Jews were generally hated and despised by all other nations, and nothing could be easier than to avail themselves of that public

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* Thus we account for many seeming contradictions in scripture. St. Paul beautifully calls this variety, "a change of voice," Gal. iv. 20. The *same* heavenly instructor speaks; but speaks, so to say, in different tones, adapted to the different tempers of the auditors. This notion of revelation is a very just one; and as it authorizes our ministers in varying their addresses to their hearers, so it condemns those loose, desultory declamations, which address all, and so affect none. ROB.

hatred, to which the religion of the Jews exposed them. Nevertheless, St. Paul not only says in general, "Render not evil for evil;" but in particular, Recompense to *no man* evil for evil. As if he had said, Do not injure those on whom you could most easily avenge yourselves; hurt not the most violent enemies of the name of Jesus Christ, and of the christian profession; not even those, who have crucified your Saviour, and every day strive to destroy his gospel.

12. *Consider the* PRINCIPLE *of a word or action.* For example; John v. 14. "Behold! thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." This was the language of Jesus Christ to the man, whom he had just before healed of an infirmity of thirty-eight years standing. Him Jesus now found in the temple. It is not imaginable that this meeting was fortuitous, and unforeseen to Jesus Christ: his providence, no doubt conducted the man that way, directed him to the temple, whither he went himself to seek him. Examine then upon what *principles* Jesus Christ went to seek this miserable sinner.

If you had to examine these words of Jesus Christ to the Samaritan woman, "Go and call thy husband," John iv. You might examine the *intention* of Jesus Christ in this expression.* He did not speak thus, because he was ignorant what sort of a life this woman lived: he knew that, to speak properly, she had no husband. It was then, 1. A word of *trial;* for the Lord said this to give her an opportunity of making a free confession, "I have no husband." 2. It was a word of *kind reproof;* for he intended to convince her of the sin in which she lived, &c.

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* Jesus Christ often spoke obscurely to his disciples, and in parables. His *intention* in speaking so was the most wise and benevolent that could be imagined. Had he only designed to *inform* his disciples of truths, he would have delivered his sentiments in the plainest manner. But he intended to *exercise* their minds, to form in them *a habit of thinking,* reflecting and reasoning, and so to *endear* truths to them, by giving them the pleasure of discovering them. ROB.

Were you going to explain Acts i. 9. where it is said, "When Jesus was taken up, his disciples beheld him," it would be proper to remark the sentiments of the disciples in that moment, and to shew from what principles proceeded that attentive and earnest looking after their divine Master, while he ascended to heaven.

13. *Consider* CONSEQUENCES.* Thus, when you explain the doctrine of God's *mercy*, it is expedient, (at least sometimes) to remark the *good* and lawful uses, which we ought to make of it. You may also observe

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* By this method SYLVANUS, an ancient abbot of a monastery, convinced a travelling monk of his erroneous notions of two passages of holy scripture. The story is this: 'A certain brother came to the convent at mount Sinai, and finding the monks all at work, shook his head, and said to the abbot, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth." John vi. 27. "Mary chose the good part." Luke x. 42. Zachary, said the old abbot, to his servant, give the brother a book, and shew him into a cell. There sat the monk alone, all day long. At night, wondering that nobody had called him to dinner, he goes to the abbot. Father, says he, don't the brethren eat to day? O yes, replied the abbot, they have eaten plentifully. And why, added the monk, did you not call me? Because, brother, replied the abbot, you are a spiritual man, and have no need of carnal food. For our parts,—we are obliged to eat, and therefore we work: but you, brother, you have "chosen the good part," you sit and read all day long, and are above the want of "meat that perisheth."—Pardon me, father, I perceive my mistake. *Apotheg. Patrum in Cotelerii Eccles. Græc. Monument.* Tom. i.

'In questions of difficulty, or such as are thought so, where more satisfactory evidence cannot be had, or is not seen; if the result of examination be that there appears, upon the whole, any the lowest presumption on one side, and none on the other, or a greater presumption on one side, though in the lowest degree greater; this determines the question, even in matters of speculation; and, in matters of practice, will lay us under an absolute and formal obligation, in point of prudence and of interest, to act upon that presumption, or low probability, though it be so low as to leave the mind in very great doubt which is the truth.' BUTLER's *Analogy. Introd.*

Natural consequences are very beautiful. 'If true religion lie much in the *affections*, such means are to be desired as have much of a tendency to move the affections. Such books, and such a way of preaching the word, and administration of ordinances, and such a way of worshipping God in prayer, and singing praises, is much to be desired, as has a tendency deeply to affect the hearts of those who attend the means.' EDWARDS *on Rel. Affect.*

the false and *pernicious* consequences which ungrateful and wicked men, who sin that grace may abound, pretend to derive from this doctrine. The same remarks are applicable to the doctrine of the *efficacious grace* of the Holy Ghost in our conversion.

Moreover, this method must be taken, when you have occasion to treat of the doctrines of election and reprobation—the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ's blood—and, in general, almost all religious subjects require it; for there is not one of them all which is not subject to use and abuse. Take care, however, when you propose these good and bad consequences, that you do it properly, and when an occasion naturally presents itself; when there is reason to fear some may infer bad consequences; and when they seem to flow from the text itself.

§ 22. 14. *Reflect on the* END *proposed in an expression, or an action.** Although this is not very different from the way of principles, of which we have already spoken: yet it may afford a variety in discussing them.

If, for example, you were speaking of justification, in the sense in which St. Paul taught it, you must observe the *ends* which the apostle proposed.

15. *Consider whether there be any thing remarkable in the* MANNER *of the speech or action.* For example; "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Rom. viii. 37. You may remark, that there is more than an ordinary force in these words, *more than conquerors;* for they express an heroical triumph. He does not simply say, We bear our trials with patience; he not only says, We shall conquer in this conflict; but he affirms, *We are more than conquerors.*

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* Reflections of this kind are of great consequence to ministers—In *composing sermons; ordination* sermons, *funeral* sermons, *fast* sermons, *thanksgiving* and *commemoration* sermons are often, with great propriety, composed on the special *views* and *designs* of each—and also to the understanding of the sense of any *writer*, particularly biblical writers. Rob.

When he wrote to the Philippians, "unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." He considers sufferings as gifts of the liberality of God, for which the faithful are obliged to be thankful.

16. COMPARE *words and actions with* SIMILAR *words and actions.** The Evangelist speaks of the *things, that Jesus began to do and to teach.* Acts i. 1. Now he says the same of Moses, *he was mighty in words and in deeds,* Acts vii. 22. Here you may observe, that these two things joined together, *doing* and *teaching,*

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* Archbishop FLECHIER has a beautiful example of this in a sermon, on Matt. xxv. 43. "I was in prison, and ye visited me not." It is a charity sermon for prisoners. 'Who are *they?* and what are *we?* they are *debtors, criminals,* and *captives,* who, far from being pitied, groan in their *dungeons,* and lie there, victims to the interest, and perhaps to the passion and animosity of those who retain them. But are you not *debtors* to God for all the liberality of his providence? &c.

They are *criminals;* and are not you? Perhaps the transports of a blind, involuntary passion have hurried them into disorder, which the law punishes: but do not you cherish in your hearts passions yet more dangerous, which the laws leave unpunished? You have not shed your brother's blood, but how often have you wounded his reputation? How often have you abandoned him to poverty by your avarice? What difference is there between these miserable offenders and you, except that they bear the punishment of their sins, while you live in pleasure? They groan, while you triumph, &c.

In fine, they are *captives* and *prisoners;* and has not the Holy Ghost told you, that "whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin?" Is there any heavier chain than an inveterate habit? What is the life of the greatest part of mankind, but a continual slavery? We see various passions reign over them by succession; delivered from pride they are enslaved by avarice. Thus men change their tyrants, not their state, and the last avenges the excesses of the first.—What calamity is comparable to that of a prison? What words are lamentable enough sufficiently to paint a prisoner's misery? Shall I represent prisons to you as cursed regions, where there falls neither rain nor dew? Shall I describe dungeons as sepulchres, in which men are buried alive? Shall I shew you children mourning for the captivity of their fathers? fathers lamenting the poverty of their children? mothers disabled from watching over the conduct of their daughters? daughters incapable of contributing to the assistance of their mothers? Many enemies to insult them, few or no friends to comfort them, no charitable hands to relieve them!" &c.

FLECHIER *Serm. Tom.* ii. *Quatrieme Exhort. pour les Pris.*

are distinguishing characters of a true prophet, who never separates practice from doctrine. You may then make an edifying comparison between Moses and Jesus Christ: both *did* and *taught;* but there was a great difference between the *teaching* of the one and that of the other. There was also a great difference between the *deeds* of the one, and those of the other. Most of the miracles of Moses were miracles of *destruction;* those of Jesus were miracles of *benevolence.*

So again, when the infidelity of the Jews, in rejecting the Messiah, is discussed, you may examine their prejudices and their maxims, as they are narrated in the gospel; and these you may compare with those of the church of Rome, in rejecting the reformation; for they are very much alike.

So again, when you consider St. Paul's answers to the objections of the Jews, who pleaded, that they were the people of God, and that his covenant belonged to Abraham and his posterity; you may observe, that these answers are like ours to the Roman Church, when they affirm, they are the church of God. As the apostle distinguisheth two Israels, one after the flesh, and the other after the spirit; so we distinguish two churches, one which is only so in outward profession before men, possessing the pulpits, the churches, and the schools: and the other, which is the church in the sight of God, having a holy doctrine, and a lively faith.

17. *Remark the* DIFFERENCES *of words and actions on different* OCCASIONS.* When a weak scrupulosity, or a tenderness of conscience was in question, which put some of the faithful upon eating only herbs, St. Paul exhorted the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak. But when the same St. Paul speaks of false teachers, who wanted to impose a yoke on conscience, and who, under pretext of meats and days, were attempting to

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* This rule regards what our divines call *seeming contradictions,* and is, in general, the true conciliator of apparent inconsistencies. To observe the *occasion* of a text is often the easiest to arrive at the sense of it. Rob.

join Moses with Jesus Christ, as if christians were yet obliged to observe the ceremonial law; then the apostle exhorts the faithful to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Gal. v. 5.

So again, when you find in the gospel, that Jesus Christ sometimes forbad his disciples to publish the miracles that he wrought, and to declare his divinity; and, at other times, that he ordered them to publish upon *the house tops* what they had *heard in private*, and to preach to all nations the mysteries of his kingdom; you must remark, that this difference is owing to different occasions.

The same diversity may be remarked in what the Lord Jesus said to the Canaanitish woman—that he was "sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel"—and that it was "not meet to give the children's bread to dogs." This seems contrary to an almost infinite number of passages of scripture, which affirm, Jesus Christ is "the light of the Gentiles"—"To him shall the gathering of the people be." These and all other such passages will perfectly agree, if you distinguish time and occasion.

18. CONTRAST *words and actions*. Thus you may oppose the agonies and terrors which seized Jesus Christ at the approach of death, against the constancy and joy of the martyrs, who flew to martyrdom as to a victory. This contrariety of emotions is accounted for by the difference of the persons. One was filled with a sense of God's wrath against men: the others were filled with a sense of his love. Christ met death as an armed enemy: and as one who, till that time, had a right to triumph over mankind; but martyrs approached him as a vanquished enemy, or rather as an enemy reconciled, who, having changed his nature, was become favourable to men. In one word, Jesus Christ was at war with death: whereas death was at peace and in friendship with the martyrs.

In general, we may affirm, that *contrast* is one of the most beautiful topics of christian rhetoric: and that which furnishes the most striking illustrations.* Great

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* There is no end of the utility of it in Theology. It illustrates *revelation*, by contrasting it with all systems of *natural* religion: "Never man spake like this man."—It illustrates *christianity*, by placing it opposite to *Judaism:* "Ye are not come to mount Sinai; but ye are come to mount Zion."—It distinguisheth *true ministers* of Christ from pretenders: "We are not as many who corrupt the word of God; but we speak as of God."—It displays the beauty of a *true church*, by comparing it with the deformity of false religion. "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"—It is of excellent use in preaching the *law*, by contrasting what men *are* with what they *ought to be*.—It is excellently adapted to *comfort*, by comparing the wisdom of *providence*, with the folly of him who complains of it—the sufficiency of pardoning mercy, with the abundance of a sinner's unworthiness—the pleasures of *piety*, with the amusements of sin—the privileges of a *saint*, with the licentiousness of a sinner—the aids of the Holy Spirit, with the efforts of the tempter—the joys beyond *death*, with the agonies of dying.—It is useful to recover a *back-slider*, by comparing his present state with a former state. In these, and in a thousand other cases, contrast is lovely beyond conception, and scripture abounds with it. Contrasts may be taken from *person*, *place*, *time*, *relation*, *&c.*

Contrasts are striking. One of the finest modern contrasts, that I have seen, is that of Bishop *Massillon* in one of his advent sermons, *Pour le Jour des Morts*. The subject is *death*. The text, Rev. xiv. 13. The whole sermon, except exordium and conclusion, which are short, consists of two—what shall I call them, pictures or originals? The one is a description of a *dying saint*, the other that of an *expiring sinner*. I dare not attempt to translate them. They are inimitably beautiful. Each departing soul reflects coolly on the past, attends to present condition, and looks forward to futurity. What sources of joy to the one, and of misery to the other!

Thus the late pious Mr. WALKER, of *Truro*, began a sermon on these words, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." Rev. xiv. 13. After a pause, he exclaimed, 'How!—Blessed are the *dead!*—Blessed are the DEAD!—No surely—Blessed are the *living;* for they possess the power of gratifying their *sensual appetites*—the means of cherishing their *passions*—opportunities of pursuing their *lawful business*—advantages of *intellectual attainments*—Are not these the blessed? Hear St. John; "Blessed are the dead *which die in the Lord.*" They enjoy advantages superior to all these. This introduction was greatly admired. It struck at once the attention of the audience, and a plan of discussion for the preacher.

Contrasts must be well placed. They produce fine effects every where; but the finest, I presume to guess, in *conclusions*. Thus Cardinal BORROMEUS closes his second oration to his clergy; 'God your offended judge, says, If ye are seers by office, how is care, however, must be taken that the oppositions be natural, easy to comprehend, and properly placed, in a full clear light.

§ 23. 19. *Examine the* GROUNDS, *or* CAUSES *of an action or an expression;* and shew the truth or equity of it.* For example: When the incarnation of Jesus Christ is in question, as in this text, "The word was made flesh," you may recur to the foundations of this truth, as revealed in scripture.

In like manner, when you treat of the *resurrection* of Christ, or his *ascension* to heaven, you must take this topic, and shew the fidelity and credibility of the testimony borne by his apostles.

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it ye are blind in practice? If I appointed you to feed my flocks, why do you suffer them to perish for hunger? If ye be the salt of the earth, where is your savour? If ye be the light of the world, why do ye suffer people to sit in darkness! If I appointed you to be my mouth, why are ye dumb? If ye be unequal to your duty, why are ye so ambitious as to hold your offices? If equal to it, why do ye not discharge it? The fire of the prophets, the precepts of the gospel, the examples of the apostles, religion, piety, the state of the church, the terrible day of judgment, endless rewards, and everlasting woes, are all these nothing to you? *Past. Instruct. Orat. concit.* ROB.

* To this topic this sermon of MASSILLON must be referred: 'First, What are the *secret causes* of our revolt against the will of God? Secondly. What are the advantages which accompany submission to his holy will? Whence is it, that we never will what God wills? Yet, whence is it, that there is so much comfort and delight in willing only what he wills?

I. What are the *secret causes* of our revolt against the will of God?——It proceeds,
  1. From a *vain reason,* which rashly condemns what it cannot comprehend.
  2. It is owing to *self-love,* which inclines us to refer every thing to ourselves, and which condemns any thing that does not enter into our views and schemes of happiness.
  3. It proceeds from a *false notion of virtue,* which substitutes useless desires after what God does not require of us, in the place of duties, which his holy will does impose upon us.

II. What are the *advantages* of submission?——These arise,
  1. From a quiet *confiding* in God for future things.
  2. An *acquiescence* in his will, under present embarrassments.
  3. And a deliverance from useless *regrets* concerning the past.

MASSIL. *Myst. pour la Purific. de la S. Vierge.*

I said also, that the grounds and causes of an action or expression might be examined, to *shew the equity and truth* of either.* This principally takes place, when any thing surprising and uncommon is in question; for such things at first seems to shock the minds of auditors; or when you are pressing home an exhortation to the practice of any duty, which cannot be performed without difficulty.—For example: The Pharisees complain in the gospel, that the disciples of Christ did "not keep the traditions of the elders." In order to justify the disciples, shew the foundations of christian liberty.

So again, Jesus Christ, after he had healed the paralytic man, commanded him to "sin no more, lest a worse thing should come unto him." You must go to the *grounds* of the expression, to shew its equity. This topic is of great use in explaining the commandments of the law, the *equity* of which must be made to appear.

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* Thus MASSILLON persuades to a life of piety, though accompanied with many disgustful circumstances: John x. 31. "Then the Jews took up stones to stone him." These were the returns of gratitude which Jesus Christ received of men: these the consolations with which heaven permitted him to be exercised in the painful course of his ministry. At one time they treated him as a Samaritan, as one that had a devil; at another, "they took up stones to stone him." And thus the Son of God passed the whole time of his life, always exposed to the most obstinate contradictions, meeting with almost none but such as were insensible of his benefit, and rebellious against his preaching; and all this without his letting fall the least sign of impatience, or the least complaint.

But must I add? We, my brethren! we his members and disciples, alas! the smallest disgusts, the least oppositions we meet with, in the practice of piety, offend our delicacy! Nothing is to be heard but complaining and murmuring, when we cease to taste those pleasing attractions, which render duty a delight. Tossed and distressed, we are almost tempted to abandon God, and return to the world, as to a gentler and more convenient master; in short, we would have nothing but comforts and pleasures in the service of God!

But we ought to abide in a course of obedience, though we do meet with disgusts: Because,—disgusts are inevitable in *this life*—those of *piety* are not so bitter as we imagine—they are less than those of the *world*—and, lastly, let them be as great as they may, pious people have *resources*, which worldings have not.

MASSIL. *Carême, Tom.* iv.

In short, it is proper to take this method with all exhortations to piety, charity, &c. which are found in scripture. In order to persuade people to the practice of them, their *fitness* must be shewed, by opening the grounds, reasons, and principles of our obligations to the practice of all these virtues.

20. *Remark the* GOOD *and* BAD *in expressions and actions.*[*] This topic is of very great use, in explaining the histories recorded in the gospel, where you will frequently find actions and words, which may be called *mixed;* because, in general, they proceed from some good principles; and, in particular, they have a good deal of weakness and infirmity in them.[†]

21. SUPPOSE *things.* This topic is principally useful in controversy. For example: When you are speaking of the merit of good works, you may take this way of supposition, and say, Let us suppose, that Jesus Christ and his apostles believed that men merited eternal life by their good works: let us suppose that they intended to teach us this doctrine in the gospels and epistles; tell me, I beseech you, if, upon this supposition, (which is precisely what our adversaries pretend) they ought to have affirmed what they have. You may also make such suppositions in morality, as well as in controversy, in order to give greater weight to your exhortations.[‡]

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[*] On this runs Mr. SAURIN's sermon on Transient Devotions, from Hos. vi. 4. Vol. i. Serm. 9. *Eng.*

[†] Thus Matt. xvi. 22. "Then Peter took him;" &c. You see herein—his *love* to his Master—a most *lively* affection, interesting him for his master—an *honest freedom*—a strong *faith* in his Master's power, that it depended only on himself to suffer or not. All these are *good* dispositions. Here follow the *bad* ones. Peter discovers gross *ignorance* of the ways of divine wisdom—his love had something merely human and *carnal* in it—there was in it a troublesome and criminal *boldness*—it even seems as if Peter imagined, Christ's discourse proceeded only from his fear of death.

CLAUDE.

[‡] Thus Gen. iii. 15. "The seed of the woman," &c. If we *suppose* our first parents to understand these words literally; and that God meant them so to be understood, this passage must appear absolutely ridiculous. Do but imagine that you see God coming to *judge* the offenders; Adam and Eve before him in the utmost dis-

22. *Guard against* OBJECTIONS.* There are very few texts of scripture where this topic may not be made use of, and it is needless to mention examples, they will occur to every one without much reflection. Remark, however, that objections must be natural, and popular, nor far-fetched, nor too philosophical; in a word, they must be such as it is absolutely necessary to observe and refute. They must be proposed in a clear and simple style, without rhetorical exaggerations; yet not unadorned, not unaffecting. I think it is never adviseable to state objections, and defer the answers to them till another opportunity: rather, answer them directly, forcibly, and fully.

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tress; that you hear God inflicting *pains*, and *sorrows*, and *misery*, and *death*, upon the first of the human race; and that, in the midst of all this scene of woe and great calamity, you hear God foretelling, with great *solemnity*, a *very trivial* accident that should sometimes happen in the world: that serpents would be apt to bite men by the heels, and that men would be apt to revenge themselves, by striking them on the head. Great comfort it was to Adam, doubtless, after telling him, that his days shall be short, and full of misery, and his end without hope, to let him know, that he should now and then knock a snake on the head, but not even that without paying dear for his poor victory, for the snake should often bite him by the heel. Adam, surely, could not understand this prophecy in this sense, though some of his sons have so understood it; a plain indication how much more some men are concerned to maintain a literal interpretation of scripture, than they are to make it speak common sense.

SHERLOCK on Prophecy. Disc. iii.

Bishop MASSILLON's sermon, on Christ's divinity, is formed upon this plan.——' If Jesus Christ were only a mere man,——

I. The *glory* of his ministry would be an inevitable occasion of idolatry to us.—An illustrious person was expected by all mankind—promised by the prophets—his birth, life, miracles, &c. were all grand, glorious, and unheard-of, and all corresponding with prophecy.

II. The *spirit* of his ministry would become a dreadful snare to our innocence.—He preached and practised holiness, as even they who deny his divinity own—The world received numberless advantages, in consequence of his coming—He foretold many events since fulfilled. If then we own the truth of the bible, we must own his divinity.'' MASS. *Serm. Advent.*

* Objections against a doctrine may be *created*, by an awkward manner of attempting to *prove* it—may be *strengthened* by being *omitted*. ROB.

§ 24. 23. *Consider* CHARACTERS *of majesty, meanness, infirmity, necessity, utility, evidence, &c.*

(1.) *Majesty and magnanimity.* Take an example of this, from John xiv. 1. "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me." These words are characterized by a *majesty*, which exalts Jesus Christ above all ordinary pastors, and above all prophets; for who beside the Son of God could say, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me?* They imply that faithful souls may repose an entire confidence in his power, protection, and government; and that the shadow of his wings will dissipate the sorrows of their minds, and leave no more room for fear.*

(2.) *Meanness and Infirmity.* You will very often observe characters of meanness and infirmity in the words and actions of the disciples of Jesus Christ. As when they asked him, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Acts i. 6. You see, even after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, they were full of that low and carnal idea, which they had entertained, of a temporal Messiah.†

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* Thus John xiv. 18. "I will not leave you comfortless," or, *orphans.* A student of divinity cannot help observing here,

I. A singularity of character in Christ. He had every thing human in the highest perfection. His joys were grave—his griefs were just—his gentleness and his goodness, his inflexibility and his humanity, all his excellencies were in perfect harmony with each other.

II. The nature and use of affection in a preacher. O how deep into the heart go those periods, which are sown in the unforced, uninvited tears of the preacher! St. Paul's last sermon to the Ephesians was delivered in the true spirit of his pattern. He delivered it *with many tears;* the people *wept sore—fell on his neck—kissed* the departing servant of God—and "sorrowed most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more." Acts xx. ROB.

† In regard to *style; translations* often mislead preachers, and give an air of meanness to the style, and a low turn of thought to the subject. God commanded Ezekiel, during the captivity, while Israel and Judah were two kingdoms, to signify to the captives that the two kingdoms should hereafter be united and incorporated into one civil state. In order to express this by a visible sign, as usual, the Lord ordered him to take *two wooden* tablets, to

There is an almost an infinite number of texts in the New Testament, where such infirmities appear; and you must not fail to remark them, in order to prove—That grace is compatible with much human weakness—That heavenly light arises by degrees upon the mind—and, that the strongest and farthest advanced christians ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.

(3.) *Necessity.* In regard to *necessity*, you may very often remark this in explaining the doctrines of religion: as when you speak of the mission of Jesus Christ into the world—of his familiar conversation with men—of his death—resurrection—and ascension to heaven, &c. for you may not only consider the *truth*, but also the *necessity* of each; and by this mean open a most beautiful field of theological argument and elucidation.*

(4.) *Utility.* Where a thing does not appear absolutely necessary, you may remark its *utility:* as—in some particular miracles of Jesus Christ—in some peculiar afflictions of the faithful—in the manner in which St. Paul was converted—and in an infinite number of subjects, which present themselves to a preacher to be discussed.

(5.) *Evidence.* Evidence must be particularly pressed in articles, which are disputed, or which are likely to be controverted. For example, were you to treat of the second commandment, in opposition to the custom and practice of worshipping images in the church of Rome, you should press the *evidence* of the words—That they are not in some obscure part of revelation, but in the *moral law*—he uses not only the term *image;* but *likeness* of *all* things—forbidding not only the *worshipping*

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write upon one, *Judah*, and upon the other, *Israel*, and to frame them so that they might be jointed together, and become one in his hand. Our translators rendered the phrase "*two sticks.*" Ezek. xxxvii. 16. ROB.

* St. Paul illustrates the gospel by this topick, in his epistle to the Hebrews. There is made of *necessity* a change of the law—it is *of necessity* this man have somewhat to offer—there must *of necessity* be the death of the testator. Heb. vii. viii. ix. ROB.

of them, but also making *use* of them—adding the highest *interests* to inforce it; "for I am Jehovah thy God," &c.

You may also use the same character of evidence, when you explain several passages, which adversaries abuse, as these words. "This is my body which is broken for you;" and these in the sixth of John, "Eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood:" and those passages also in St. James, which speak of justification by works. For in treating these passages, in opposition to the false senses which the church of Rome gives of them, you must assemble many circumstances, and place each in its proper light, so that altogether they may diffuse a great brightness upon the text, and clearly shew its true sense.*

§ 25. 24, *Remark* DEGREES. For example, Gal. i. "If we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." After you have remarked the extreme force and significancy of the words, observe that the apostle denounced an anathema *twice*, even denouncing it against himself, should he ever be guilty of what he condemns, denouncing it even against an *angel* from heaven in the same case. You must observe, the apostle does not always use the *same* vehemence when he speaks against error; but he speaks here of an *essential* corruption of the gospel, which the false apostles aimed at in the churches of Galatia; they were annihilating the grace of Christ, by associating it with the Mosaic œconomy; they aimed at the entire ruin of the church, by debasing the purity of the gospel. In this case the conscience of this good man could contain no longer, he stretched his zeal and vehemence as far as possible, he became inexorable, and pronounced anathemas; nothing prevented him, neither the authority of the greatest men, no, nor the dignity of the glorious angels, "if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel, let him be accursed."

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* It is fashionable with many divines, to boast of their aversion to controversy, and to make a merit of teaching only such doctrines as are not disputable. But, is there any one doctrine of natural or revealed religion, which is not controverted? Does not every deist deny our bible, and every atheist the being of our God? A man, therefore, who determines to teach only undisputed articles, determines, *ipso facto*, to teach nothing at all.

No theological subject requires more accurate investigation than this article of *evidence*. Evidence is that which demonstrates. Now there are various *kinds* and *degrees* of evidence, and it would very much contribute to clear a point in debate, were disputants first in all to agree on certain *data*, or *what* should be allowed evidence of the case in question. ROB.

25. *Observe different* INTERESTS.* Thus, if you are explaining the miracle, which Jesus Christ wrought in the synagogue, on the sabbath day, when he healed the withered hand, in the presence of the Herodians, the Pharisees; you may remark the different *interests* of the spectators, in that act of our Lord Jesus; for, on the one hand, Moses and his religion seemed interested therein: on the other, the Herodians, the Pharisees, and the poor afflicted man. Thus this action of Jesus Christ, having various relations, becomes as it were a point, whence many lines may be drawn, one on this side, another on that; and hence arise the different remarks which may be made upon it.

26. *Distinguish—Define—Divide.*

DISTINCTION.† To speak properly, we *distinguish* when we consider a thing in different views. As, for example, Faith may be considered either objectively or subjectively. So again (to use the same example) faith may be considered with a view to justification, or with a view to sanctification. In the first view, it is opposed to works; in the second, it is the principle and cause of good works; it contains them in summary and abridgment.

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* This beautiful topick of illustration may serve for a clue to many passages of scripture, to almost all history, prophane and sacred; and to numberless affairs, which are daily transacted before our eyes. ROB.

MASSILLON, in a sermon on Christmas-day, composes by this topick—'God and man are interested in Christ's birth.'

I. *God's glory* was concerned.—For *idolatry* had transferred that worship to others, which was due only to him.—*Formality* prevailed among the Jews, and they rendered him a service not worthy of him—*Philosophy* had conveyed away the glory of his providence and eternal wisdom—Three daring insults, which mankind offered to God, and which Christ came to remove.

II. The *peace* of *mankind* was interested in Christ's birth, for they had robbed one another of that—by pride—by voluptuousness—by revenge. 'Christ's grace heals the first—his doctrine the second—his example the last.' *Pour. Noel. Advent.*

† Qui bene distinguit bene arguit.

Thus man may be considered with a view to *civil* society; so he is obliged to such and such duties, and partakes of such and such advantages: or he may be considered with regard to church-fellowship; so he is subject to other laws, and enjoys other privileges. This custom of distinguishing into different views is very common in preaching.

DEFINITION.* This is sometimes used when an act of God is spoken of; as the pardon of our sins; the justification of our persons, &c.—or when a virtue or a vice is in question; for then it may not be improper to define.

DIVISION. This regards either different species of the genus, or different parts of a whole; and it may sometimes be used profitably. Thus, in speaking of God's providence in general, you may consider the extent of that providence, to which are subject—Natural causes—Things contingent—Independent—Good and bad—Great and small.

27. *Compare the different* PARTS *of the* TEXT *together.* This is a very useful topick: and it will often furnish very beautiful considerations, if we know how to make a proper use of it. For example, in this text of St. Paul to the Romans, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." You may make a very edifying comparison between the last part, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit," and the first part, "there is no condemnation;" and

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* Nothing seems easier at first sight than definition, yet nothing requires greater skill. See WATTS's Logic. Part i. ch. vi. sect. v.

you may remark, that in the one, the apostle expresses what God does in favour of the faithful, and in the other what the faithful do for the glory of God. Take away justification, and there cannot possibly be any good works; take away good works, and there is no more (evidence of) justification.*

So again, in this beautiful passage, in the second of Ephesians; "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ; by grace are ye saved." You may oppose and compare these two subjects in the text, *dead in sin*, and *rich in mercy*, as being two extremes; extreme misery, and extreme mercy; one in us, and the other in God.†

§ 26. Of texts to be discussed in a way of *continued application*. We have said, there are two general ways of discussing a text, that of explication, and that of observation. These two ways of preaching we call *textuary;* because, in effect, they keep to the text without digression; they regard it as the subject-matter of the whole discussion, or, if you please, as the field, which they have to cultivate, or to reap: but, beside these, there is a third way, which is, without explaining or making observations, the making of a *continual application* of it, and the reducing of it immediately to practice.

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* Many of our divines have well observed, that on a clear distinction between justification and sanctification depends an accurate knowledge of the whole plan of redemption. When these two doctrines are confounded, the rest of the system cannot be clear. ROB.

† Here our author's *topicks* end; and, it is to be remembered, they are subject to both *use* and *abuse*. Whoever chooses may consult QUINTIL. *Institut.* Orat. Lib. v. cap. 10. CICERO *De Orat.* Lib. ii. et in *Topicis*. ARISTOT. *Rhetor.* Lib. ii. cap. 23, 24. Lord BACON justly observes, 'Constet, scopum et finem hujusce rei esse *promptitudinem quandam*, et, *expeditum usum cognitionis nostræ* potius quam ejusdem *amplificationem* aut *incrementum*.'

BACON. *De augment. Scient.* Lib. v. Cap. 3.

The editor has omitted, in this place, a long discourse upon 1. Thess. iv. 7. which Mr. CLAUDE had subjoined, with a view to exemplify the discussion of a text, by way of *observations*. But it was not altogether calculated to answer the end proposed, because it exemplified very few of the preceding *topicks*, and those without any attention to their order, or any intimation *what* topicks he intended to exemplify. Though, therefore, the discourse contained, as every production of Mr. CLAUDE's must, many striking and useful sentiments, the reader who seeks information respecting the composition of a sermon, has no occasion to regret the omission of it; more especially as the discourse was at least one third as long as all the twenty-seven topicks taken together. Indeed, the examples adduced under the various topicks sufficiently illustrate the author's meaning; and to attempt to illustrate *all* of them in *one discourse* must of necessity render any composition ridiculous. SIMEON.

In this manner we must principally manage texts exhorting to holiness and repentance, as 1 Cor. xi. 28. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup;" for, laying aside all theological observations, you may actually enter upon self-examination.

This manner, well and wisely disposed, by choosing proper occasions, will produce an excellent effect: but always remember, under this rule, that in using this method, something searching and powerful must be said, or it would be better let alone.*

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* We will exemplify one of the texts, which may be discussed by way of perpetual application. Let us take Paul's words to the Philippians, chap. ii. 12. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

EXORDIUM.

How lamentable the condition of mankind, that so few know the truth of salvation—what numbers to whom it is not preached—what numbers more to whom it is preached, who corrupt it with errors and superstitions—and what numbers of those who do know it, criminally neglect their salvation.

It is therefore truly astonishing to reflect, that so *few will be saved*—and yet, in another view, why should we wonder at this alarming fact, since so few apply to it in the manner they ought?

Let us, therefore, my brethren, profit by this time of our calling, and not, when we go out of the world, have to ask ourselves what we have been doing in it; and to reproach ourselves with having abused the patience and mercy of God.

TRANSITION.

Were we about to treat of these words in the ordinary way, several reflections might be made on the doctrines—on these terms, *your own salvation*—on the command, that we should *work it out*—and finally, on that *fear and trembling,* which must accompany our labour—but, laying apart doctrines, our design is to assist you actually to *work out your own salvation,* with that fear and trembling which so great a work demands.

DIVISION.

To this end, we shall offer some considerations on *our own salvation*—the acts by which we *work it out*—and finally, the *fear and trembling* with which these acts are accompanied.

Oh that it may please God to bless this sermon, and to give us all necessary power to enable us to set about the work of our salvation, that it may be much forwarded, before we go out of the assembly.

DISCUSSION.

I. Some considerations on *our own salvation.*

The *first* thing, my brethren, which I beseech you to meditate on, is, that God, has had so much compassion for us as to prepare a *salvation.*—We were his enemies, and he has mercifully proposed reconciliation—we were plunged into an abyss of misery, and he has kindly stretched out his hand from on high to help us.

Salvation consists in *benefits inexpressible*—for they must be proportioned to the worth of the blood of Christ, which is most sacred and valuable.—Can there be a subject more important or affecting?—Enter then, I entreat you, with me into this meditation. Whence is it we take so little pains about that which is so very important to us?—Salvation presents itself to us daily as a rich treasure, coming from the bosom of *eternal mercy*—yet we do not think about it. What strong stupidity then are we under!

That we may the better perceive the importance of this salvation, and the necessity of attaching ourselves to it, methinks we need only turn our eyes a little to the miserable state of those, who neglect it during the whole course of their lives, and at length go out of the world without having at all employed themselves about it.

How many abysses has vice opened to ingulph mankind! Into how many shapes does it transform itself to suprise and destroy them! Sometimes it appears under the beautiful veil of riches and grandeur, sometimes under the agreeable charms of sensual pleasures—In short, sin is a serpent twisting itself a thousand ways, to slide into men's hearts, in order to prevent their thinking about their salvation.

Moreover, if you cast your eyes on this part of the world, which appears the most civilized and refined, you will see people so immersed in an almost infinite number of occupations perpetually employing them, that there does not remain a moment to think of the most important matters. Some are, &c.

To these considerations we may add another, which more immediately regards good people, that is, the small number of be-the three methods above-mentioned, a fourth may be

lievers, who are separated, in a manner, from the world to serve God. We are, I grant, separated from the worldly, by the profession of the gospel: but yet do we not live in a commerce with them in civil life? and are we not consequently always exposed to the influence of their bad example, &c?

After all, say you, What interest have we in this salvation? And why must we quit all things, to apply ourselves to this with so much diligence and earnestness? My brethren, to judge rightly of the interest you have in it, I entreat you to consider some few truths, which are not unknown to you, although perhaps they have never made all the impression on you, which they ought to have made. Remember, then, you must die: this necessity is imposed on us all in so inviolable a manner, that no man can possibly exempt himself.

As then death is enevitable, so is judgment: but, alas! what judgment? a judgment so terrible, that St. Peter reasons in this manner, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and ungodly appear?" A judgment so dreadful, that sinners will cry to the *mountains, Fall on us, &c.* Above all remember, this judgment must needs be followed with eternal life, or eternal death; with perfect salvation or damnation. This judgment is so certain, that the Lord, not content only to declare it in his word, gives us some forebodings of it in our consciences. What believer does not feel every day a tribunal of God prepared in his heart! What dreadful blindness is it then, that, with so much certainty of this divine judgment we should yet neglect to prepare for it.

One of the most useful and admirable powers, which distinguishes man from other animals, is prudence, a sagacity respecting future things. How then comes it to pass, that while we employ our prudence so usefully about temporal things, we are all on a sudden deprived of it, when we should be concerned about the most important of all future things, salvation or damnation?

I cannot help observing here two illusions, to which the greatest part of mankind are subject.

1. We almost always imagine, that our salvation is a very easy thing, which requires a very little time. Never was any thing more false than this idea of salvation. True and sincere conversions, in the last moments of life, are so *rare*, that God has left us but one example in all scripture,—that of the converted thief. But let no man imagine, from this example, that it shall be so with him. Jesus Christ does not die every day; and who told you, that what he did in the act of the sacrifice, he will repeat again every day?

Conversion, in the last hour, is the most difficult thing in the world. The heart is bound by a thousand old habits, long ago contracted, and which, like so many chains, prevent a freedom of action. By what means, then, shall a man be brought out of such a miserable state? I know God can do it, for nothing is impossible to added, which consists in reducing the texts to a num-

him. But for this purpose there must be a singular effort of the omnipotence of God.

I am not afraid to say, that the sin of those who defer their repentance, is of so *aggravated* a nature, that it renders them not only unworthy of converting grace but even detestable. Such people say, in effect, "We will employ all our best days in debaucheries and sins, and so content ourselves with them; and when we are no longer good for any thing, we will be converted and so prevent our damnation." Do you think, a reasoning so horrible, a procedure so detestable, can be agreeable to God?

Consider, I entreat you, there cannot be a more foolish and rash design than that of putting off repentance to old age, since it takes for granted the most doubtful and uncertain thing in the world, which is, that we shall *live* to a hoary old age. Is not this the grossest of all illusions?

2. The second illusion, which beguiles multitudes, is, an imagination, that they discharge their duty, when, without concerning themselves about their own salvation, as the apostle commands, they employ themselves about that of other people. This they do by *saying* the finest things in the world about religion, and by being always on the watch to *censure* and slander the actions of others.

I will not say, we should entirely neglect the salvation of our neighbours; God commands, and charity obliges us to attend to it. However, I do affirm, it is not this only which ought to employ us; it is not our first and principal occupation. We must *begin* by working out our *own* salvation.

II. But it is time to pass to the *second* part of this sermon, in which I require less the attention of your minds than the emotion of your hearts.

I entreat you both simply to hear and judge of the truth and importance of what I say to you. May your consciences do what my tongue dictates, *work out your own salvation!* and let a just comment on these divine words be found to day in the exact obedience which we render to them.

1. The first act, with which we must begin, is a holy *reconciliation to God.* For this purpose, having cast our eyes on the greatness of the sins which we have committed, let us humbly have recourse to his mercy. Let each of us, in particular, recal his wanderings from God, &c.

If our repentance brings us to the foot of God's tribunal, let it bring us thither profoundly humbled; for *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.* Let it bring us thither deeply affected, &c.

But as our repentance, however sincere, avails nothing without, a propitiatory sacrifice for sin, let us add a holy and fervent recourse to the blood of Jesus Christ, and to the satisfaction he made to divine justice on the cross. This is the faith which is so often recommended to us in scripture, &c.

ber of propositions, two at least, and three or four at

As this peace with God is not made in a moment, there must be great efforts to bring our hearts into a state proper for such a reconciliation. Having then, as well as we are able, collected our own sins before our eyes, let us make some reflections on the horrors of them. Let us well examine what we are by nature compared with the great God.—Does not our blindness appear yet more strange if to this we add the *power* of the God whom we offend?—To which we may add, how much we are indebted to God, not only for his *patience*, but for that almost infinite number of *mercies* which he has afforded us.

Let us not flatter ourselves; the God we adore can never renounce his *holiness:* yet must God renounce his holiness if he receive us into his favour, without our renouncing sin. He would have communion with sin, if he had communion with impenitent sinners. It is then as impossible to unite ourselves to God without repentance, as it is to unite life and death, light and darkness.

To incline you more effectually to this repentance, let us, I beseech you, lift up our eyes to the mercy of God, and to the blood of the covenant, which Jesus Christ hath shed for us. Let us not imagine, while we feel remorse for sin, that there is no *balm in Gilead*, no consolation in God.

2. In order to "work out our own salvation," we must indeed be reconciled to God, and we must also use means to maintain peace: for the one without the other would be nothing. Our faith must be kept and increased.—We must live a holy, christian life—and repentance must be familiarized.

I grant, these things are not barely the practice of one day; let us however, understand what we may do now, without deferring it any longer.

III. Let us now pass to the *third* part. As this peace, which repentance works in us, is not a carnal security, a sinful lethargy, it is not contrary to every kind of fear; or, more properly, it is not only compatible with fear, but it is preserved only by means of fear. St. Paul, therefore, was not content with commanding us to *work out our own salvation;* but he adds, *with fear and trembling.*

1. Do not suppose the apostle meant, by these expressions, that we should indulge the fear of a *slave*, or an *enemy;* which would make us consider God, as a judge, always severe, and always angry. Far be from us this servile fear, which is incompatible with piety! Piety is nothing but a profound esteem, an infinite love for God: but how could we esteem and love him, if we imagined he was jealous of our happiness, and an enemy to our persons.

2. In the second place, the fear in question is what is called *filial*, which not only agrees very well with confidence and love, but which is their perpetual associate.

This fear inspires us with different emotions, according to the different objects we meet with. Profound respect and veneration when we appear before God, arising from a consideration of his infinite majesty—perpetual apprehensions of offending him, after most, having mutual dependence and connexion. When this method is taken, there is much more liberty than in the former, and a more extensive field opens. In the former methods you are restrained to your text, and you can only explain, and apply that; you can make no other observations, than such as precisely belong to it: but here your subject is the matter contained in your *propositions*, and you may treat of them thoroughly and extend them as far as you please, provided you do not violate the general rules of a sermon. Here you must propose not to treat of the text, but of those *subjects*, which you have chosen from several contained in the text. The way of explication is most proper to give the meaning of scripture; and this of systematical divinity.* The way of application rather regards practice than theory; but this, which we call the way of propositions, or points, is more proper to produce

declaring himself our Father in Christ Jesus—humility, arising from a comparison of our natural inclinations; and those dispositions which grace has formed in us—diligence and caution, by considering our infirmities, numerous snares; and that formidable multitude of our enemies, which attack our salvation.

Though the grace of God, which supports us in temptations, be capable of preserving us, yet, should God suspend the influence of his grace, what advantages would not the flesh obtain over the spirit, as the falls of David and Peter too sufficiently teach us. The consideration should perpetually make us *fear and tremble*.

CONCLUSION.

In a word, there are five kinds of fear, in which we ought continually to be. A fear of respect, remembering what we are in the eyes of infinite Majesty—a fear of *horror*, in regard to sin—a fear of *humility*; remember that all we are and have are of God—a fear of *precaution*, remembering that *the just falleth*—a fear of attachment to God, saying, "Forsake me not, O Lord; O my God be not far from me."

In this manner let us work out our own salvation, and God will at length change grace into glory, and give the entire and perfect enjoyments of his everlasting inheritance. CLAUDE.

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* Some writers have exclaimed bitterly against systems of divinity, others have exaggerated the utility of them. Perhaps the truth may be, neither side has taken sufficient pains to understand the other. Theology, reduced to a *system*, is nothing more than a regular arrangement of what we hold for religion, and there can be

an acquaintance with systematical divinity, and it will equally serve theory and practice.*

no damage done by orderly dispositions of truths. On the contrary, much benefit arises to a student of divinity by them; for a system is as advantageous to a minister, as a regular set of books to a merchant. A minister's fancy is a kind of a waste-book, his system is a sort of ledger. Rob.

* For example, Rom. viii. 13. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if through the Spirit, &c." After explaining the terms, the whole discourse may be reduced to two propositions:

1. The damnation of the wicked is inevitable.

It is deplorable to consider the blindness in which the greatest part of the people in the world live, who seldom think of the punishments of hell, or the consequences of death. From this blindness comes their insensibility to religion, and their extreme attachment to the vanities of this present evil world.

Yet, however great this blindness is, it is in a measure voluntary, proceeding more from the malice of the heart, than the darkness of the understanding; for the passions avoid those objects, which are disagreeable to them, and perpetually substitute others to employ the mind. Hence, it is of the last importance to meditate on this matter, on which depends our eternal interest in a future world.

1. Man is a creature subject to a law; and even the light of his conscience discovers an essential difference between vice and virtue, good actions and bad. But a law is no law, if it do not suppose a judgment; and judgment is no judgment, if it do not suppose punishment.

And by the consent of all mankind, in the thickest darkness of paganism, when God suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, even then, it was always acknowledged that there were rewards to the virtuous, and punishments to the impious.

But this is capable of further proof by the principles of all religions. There never was, nor can there ever be any, which is not founded on this principle, that God is our sovereign Judge, who holds in his hands our life and death.

Finally, we observe, that revealed religion has carefully placed this truth in full evidence; shewing not only the *truth* of the punishment of sinners, but also the *degrees* of it.—A punishment after death and judgment—which involves both body and soul—which has truly the essence of pain, and not annihilation—a punishment proportional in greatness as well as in duration.

2. Having thus established the truth of our proposition, we may pass on to the vain *subterfuges*, which sinners use on the subject. —It is a distressing subject, therefore, they do not like to think about it; but what folly is there in this conduct. They resemble prisoners already in irons, and doomed to punishment, who stifle the sense of the misery by plunging into debauchery.

When worldly men cannot entirely avoid the thought of damna-

§ 28. It must not be thought, that these *four* ways of discussing texts are so heterogeneous, that they

tion, they venture to take refuge in *false notions.*—' God, say they, is a gracious judge, he has the compassions of a father.' What a marvellous abuse is this of mercy! But will mercy allow the impunity of that sinner, who persists in sin, and would make compassion itself an accomplice in his crimes?

The wicked seldom fail to abuse the evangelical doctrine of the death of Christ—to hide in a *multitude* like themselves—to consider damnation as a very distant thing—to *extenuate* their sins, and to hide the enormity and number of them.

But, to speak plainly, all these are only vain pretences, the falsehood of which even the wicked acknowledge; the only reason why they avoid conversion is, that ardent love, that obstinate attachment which they have to vice. This is the true cause; and all the rest, if they would speak honestly, are only vain pretences.

Now, I ask, is not this love to sin the greatest folly in the world? while on the one hand, it renders us incapable of enjoying ourselves; and, on the other hand, draws upon us the condemnation of God, and conducts us a great pace towards those eternal torments, which he has prepared for the wicked.

II. The practice of good works, and an holy and religious life, is the principal end which the gospel proposes, and the principal character of the true christian.

This is manifest from passages of scripture innumerable.—" The grace of God that bringeth salvation," &c. &c.

Indeed, by a general view of the end for which Christ came into the world, you will see he came to *destroy the works of the devil.* The works of the devil are principally two, sin and punishment—let us not imagine that Jesus Christ came into the world to take away the punishment only, and to leave sin triumphant.

I will even venture to say, he came to destroy sin rather than sorrow. Suffering concerns only the creature; but sin concerns the Creator as well as the creature; it dishonours the one and distresses the other.

Is it likely, think ye, that Jesus Christ would have quitted his mansion of glory, and descended to this earth, to acquire an impunity for criminals, leaving them immersed in sensuality and sin? Is it likely that he can hold communion with people in rebellion and profaneness?

From all which it clearly follows, that an unsanctified man has not the spirit of Christ, is not in communion with him, does not belong to his mystical body, is not a true believer; in a word, is not a true christian. Holiness is an inseparable companion, and a necessary effect of the gospel.

But, if holiness be a necessary consequence of the gospel, it is no less true that the gospel is an inexhaustible source of motives to holiness. I pass over its precepts, and rules of conduct—all its mysteries point at this—all its doctrines are so many bonds, to bind our hearts to the obedience of faith.

can never be mixed together; on the contrary, there are a great many texts, in which it will be necessary to make use of two, or three, and sometimes even of all the four ways. When a text is *explained*, it will be very often needful to make some *observations* also, and the matter will require as long an *application*. Sometimes, to explain a text well, the matter must be reduced into many *propositions*, as we have observed on these words, "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." In like manner, when the method of *observation* is used, it very often happens that some part of the text needs *explaining*, and so of the rest. These four ways must be distinguished, for two reasons:

1. Because they are very different from one another;

To which we may add, the gospel consecrates to holy uses, even what the light of nature teacheth us,—as, that God is our *Creator*, and made us by his power—and our *Preserver*, who supports us by a perpetual influence, and prevents our falling back into non-entity—that it is his providence which governs the whole universe, and particularly watches over us.

O powerful motives to love and obedience! Shall it be said that God preserves ungrateful and rebellious creatures, who do nothing but affront him? Shall it be said his sun cheers us in the same manner, as it does serpents and vipers? and that it influences us as it does envenomed dragons?

But all these motives, however great and powerful, are nothing in comparison of those which the gospel takes from its own source; and they are such as must affect every soul, which is not, I do not say hard and insensible, but entirely dead in sin, or possessed by the devil. For, in one word, that God, after all our rebellions, and all our crimes, should yet be reconciled to us; that he should give his Son, that he should give him to be flesh and blood like us, that he should give him to *die for us!* is not this love and mercy worthy of eternal praise? And what horrible ingratitude must it be, if after all this we should be yet capable of wilfully sinning against a God so good, and of counting *the blood of such a covenant an unholy thing*.

Hence it appears, that christianity is dishonoured, when the outward profession of it is attended with a bad life—how they deceive themselves, who, without sanctification and good works, imagine themselves christians—and that it is the vainest of all hopes to imagine they may be saved by such a bare profession. Many will come to Jesus Christ in the last day, saying, "Lord, Lord," &c. CLAUDE.

to explain, to make observations, to apply, and to reduce to propositions, are four very different ways of treating texts. A composer, then, must not confound them together; but he must observe the difference well, that he may use them properly.

2. Because it is customary to give the discussion of a text the name of the *prevailing* manner of handling it. We call that the way of explication, in which there is more explication than observation. We not only call that the way of observation, which has only observations, but that in which there is more observation than explication, or application, and so of the rest.

§ 29. Of the *exordium*. The exordium is that part, in which the minds of the hearers are prepared, and a natural and easy way opened to the discussion.

Taking it for granted, that an exordium must be generally used,* it may be asked, what are the principal benefits we expect to receive from them? And with what general views ought they to be composed? In answer, we say, the principal design of an exordium is to attract or excite the *affections* of the audience—to stir up their *attention*—and to *prepare* them for the particular matters of which we are about to treat.*

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* We cannot approve of the custom of the *English preachers*, who enter immediately into the literal explication of the text, and make that serve for an exordium, after which they divide their discourses into several parts, which they discuss as they go on. Surely, the hearer is not suddenly able to comprehend their explications, having yet neither emotions nor preparation. Methinks, it would be much better gently to stir them up, and move them by something, which gives no pain, than to load them all on a sudden with an explication, which they can neither clearly comprehend, nor perhaps distinctly hear. CLAUDE.

The above cited stricture was written by Mr. CLAUDE, about the middle of the reign of Charles II. The 'English preachers,' therefore, to whom he refers, must be they who flourished about that time; a period in which there were some of the best, and some of the worst preachers, that England ever had. However, the general running method, as Mr. CLAUDE says, was a bad one. The fashionable book, studied then as a guide, was WILKINS's *Ecclesiastes*, which was first published in 1646, and had run through six editions before this essay of Mr. CLAUDE was written. The book contains, Mr. Robinson observes, rude *outlines* of composition, *capable of great improvement.*—The present *abridged* edition, it is hoped, appears under an *improved* form.

The two first of these must only be proposed *indirectly*. A preacher would render himself ridiculous, if, in ordinary discourses, and without cases of extreme necessity, he should *labour*, by this mean, to acquire the esteem and affection of his congregation. This method would be more likely to make them despise than esteem him.

You must not then compliment the people, nor praise yourself, nor indeed speak of yourself in any manner of way. These are affectations which never succeed; and yet some able preachers slip into this weakness, especially when they preach to strange congregations, and, above all, when they address assemblies of the rich, the learned, or the noble. Then they never fail to interlard their exordiums with some common place saws—either the pleasure it gives them to be called to that pulpit—or an affectation of self-contempt—a confession of their great weakness—or something of this kind. To speak my opinion freely, I think these are pedantic airs, which have a very bad effect. Sensible auditors do not like to here such fantastical pretences, which are both contrary to the gravity of the pulpit, and to the decency of a modest man.†

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* Causa principii nulla est alias quam ut auditorem, quo sit nobis in cæteris partibus accommodatior, præparemus. Id fieri tribus maxime rebus, inter auctores plurimos constat, si *benevolum*, *attentum*, *docilem* fecerimus: non quia ista per totam actionem non sint custodienda, sed quia in initiis maxime necessaria.

QUINT. Instit. lib. iv. cap. i.

† It is a matter of experience, that congruity, or propriety, wherever perceived, is agreeable; and that incongruity or impropriety, wherever perceived, is disagreeable.—Nothing is more intimately related to a man than his sentiments, words and actions; and therefore we require here the strictest conformity. When we find what we thus require, we have a lively sense of propriety: when we find the contrary, our sense of impropriety is not less lively. Hence the universal distaste of *affectation*, which consists in making a shew of greater delicacy and refinement, than is suited either to the character or circumstances of the person.

Elem. Crit. vol. i. ch. x.

How then, you will ask, must the *affections* of the hearers be attracted? I answer, *indirectly*, by an exordium well chosen, and well spoken; and this is the surest way of succeeding.

In regard to *attention*, it is certain, that it ought to be awakened and fixed in the same manner, that is, by something agreeable and worthy of being heard, a composition of piety and good sense. I do not disapprove of asking sometimes for attention, either on the account of the importance of the matter, the solemnity of the day, the state of the church, or in short, of any particular occasion; but it must not be done often; for then it would never be minded; and when it is done, the fewer words the better.*

§ 30. The *principal use* of an exordium is to *prepare* the hearer's mind for the particular matters you have to treat of, and insensibly to conduct him to them.† If this end be not obtained, the exordium cannot but be impertinent; and, on the contrary, if this end be answered, the exordium cannot be improper.

When I say the hearer's mind must be prepared for, and conducted to the matter, I mean to say, these are two different things. You *prepare* the hearer for the matter, when you stir up in him such *dispositions* as he ought to have to hear well, and to profit much. You insensibly *conduct* your hearer to the matter, when, by the natural connection of the subjects of which you speak, you lead him from one thing to another, and enable him to enter into the doctrine of your sermon.

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* The fathers, about the time of Chrysostom, made use of what some have called *Præexordia*, and they thought they derived the custom from the apostles. Paul begins his epistles with, "Grace and peace be with you from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ." In imitation of this, when a father ascended the pulpit, he used to pause a moment, and then say, *Peace be with you all! or, The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!* or something of this kind. In return the people answered, *And with thy spirit!* and then he entered on his sermon. Rob.

† It may happen that the hearers may be *previously* prepared, by some awful or pleasing circumstances, some public event, or some particular case known to the auditors; then there is no need of an exordium to prepare them. Rob.

1. Let us advert a moment to each. The *preparation* must be determined by the subject of which you are going to speak; for if it be a sad and afflicting subject, in which you aim to excite the compassion, the grief, and the tears of your audience, you must begin your exordium by imparting such a disposition.

If you have to treat of a profound and difficult mystery, aim to diffuse elevation and admiration among the hearers. If some terrible example of God's justice be the subject, endeavour to stir up fear. If some enormous crime, prepare the mind for horror, by a meditation on the enormity of human corruption. If you have to treat of repentance, and in an extraordinary manner to interest your hearers in it, you must begin to dispose them to it by general ideas of God's wrath, which we have deserved—of the little fruit we have borne to his glory—or something of a like nature. If, on the contrary, the matter you have to treat of be common and tranquil, aim in your exordium to place the mind in its natural state, and only endeavour to excite honest and christian tempers, which we all ought always to have. In a word, the exordium must always participate the spirit of the subject you mean to discuss, in order to dispose your hearers for it. Not to use in this manner, is to loose all the benefit of an exordium; and to use it to an opposite purpose would be to renounce common sense.

2. The second use of an introduction is to *conduct* the hearer gradually to the subject, of which you are about to treat. This (as I have said) depends upon the connection between the subjects of the exordium with themselves, and with the matter of the discussion. I say first with *themselves*, for they must, as it were, hold each other by the hand, and have a mutual dependence and subordination, otherwise the auditor will be surprised to find himself suddenly transported from one topic to another. I say also with the *discussion*, for the exordium is principally intended to introduce that.

§. 31. 1. The first quality of an exordium is *brevity*. This, however, has a proper measure; for as it ought not to be excessively long, so neither should it be too short; the middle way is the best. The longest exordium may have ten or twelve periods, and the shortest six or seven, provided the periods be not too long. The reason is, that, on the one hand, proper time may be given the hearer to prepare himself to hear you with attention, and to follow you in the discussion of the matter; and, on the other, that, in giving time sufficient for that, you may prevent his wandering out of the subject, wearying himself, and becoming impatient. If the exordium were too short; it would oblige the hearer to enter too soon into the matter without sufficient preparation; and excessive length would weary him; for it is with an auditor, as with a man who visits a palace, he does not like to stay too long in the court, or first avenues, he would only view them transiently, without stopping, and proceed as soon as possible to gratify his principal curiosity.*

2. An exordium must be *clear*, and consequently disengaged from all sorts of abstruse and metaphysical thoughts. It should be expressed in natural and popular terms, and not over-charged with matter. Indeed, as the auditors are yet neither enlivened nor moved, you must not expect of them at first a degree of penetration and elevation, nor even a great attempt towards these, though they may be capable of them, when they are animated. You must therefore, in an exordium, avoid all that can give pain to the mind such as physical questions, long trains of reasoning, and such like. However, do not imagine, that, under pretence of great clearness, an exordium must have only theological matter, or consist rather of words than things. This would be falling into the other extreme. An exordium, then, must contain matter capable of nourishing and satisfying the mind; to do which it must be clear, easy to comprehend, and expressed in a very natural manner.

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* In particular, long periods ought to be avoided till the reader's attention be thoroughly engaged, and therefore a discourse, especially of the familiar kind, ought never to be introduced with a long period. *Elem.* of Crit, ch. xviii.

3. An exordium must be *cool* and *grave*.* Consequently no grand figures may be admitted, as apostrophes, violent exclamations, reiterated interrogations, nor, in a word, any thing that tends to give vehement emotions to the hearers; for, as the discourse must be accommodated to the state of the hearer, he in the beginning being cool and free from agitations, the speaker ought to be so too. No wise man will approve exordiums full of enthusiasm and poetical raptures, full of impetuous or angry emotions, or of bold interrogations, or surprising paradoxes to excite admiration. You must in the beginning speak gently, remembering that your auditors are neither yet in heaven, nor in the air, nor at all elevated in their way thither, but upon earth, and in a place of worship.

4. An exordium, however, ought not to be so cool and grave, as not to be at the same time *engaging* and *agreeable*.† There are three principal ends, which a preacher should propose; to instruct, to please, and to affect; but, of these three, that which should reign in an exordium is to please. I own, you should also aim to instruct and affect, but less to instruct than to please, and less still to affect than to instruct. Indeed, if you can judiciously and properly introduce any thing tender into an exordium (especially on extraordinary occasions) you may to good purpose; but, be that as it may, the agreeable should reign in this part.

You easily see by this, that you must banish from the exordium all ill-natured censures, terrible threatenings, bitter reproaches, and, in general, all that savours of anger, contempt, hatred, or indifference, and, in short, every thing that has the air of quarrelling with the hearers. Their attention must not only be excited, (you may sufficiently do this by censures and reproaches) but you must softly insinuate yourself into their esteem, so that they may not only not oppose what you say, but be well satisfied that you are an honest and well-meaning man.*

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* Mr. Claude's rule is good in general, on particular occasions, however, it may be omitted, as may be shown from the examples of *Cicero*, *Flechier*, *Fenelon*, *Saurin*, and other speakers of the first rank.

† Non inornata debet esse brevitas. Quint. *Instit.* lib. ix. cap. 2.

5. The whole of the exordium must be naturally connected with all the matter of the text. I say first, the *whole* of the *exordium*, for great care must be taken to place nothing there foreign to your subject: therefore the best exordiums are those which are composed of two propositions, the first of which is naturally and immediately connected with the second, and the second naturally and immediately with the text. Each of these propositions may be either proved, or amplified; but the last must always conduct you with ease to the subject in question, nor must the first be very distant. According to this maxim, all exordiums must be condemned, which, instead of leading you into the text, make you, as it were, tumble from a precipice into it, which is intolerable. Those also are to be condemned, which conduct to the text by many long circuits, that is, by many propositions chained together, which is certainly vicious, and can only fatigue the hearer.

I add, in the second place, the exordium must be connected with the *whole* matter of the *text*. It ought not merely to relate to one of its parts, (or to one view only, if you attend to consider it in different views) but to all. One of the principal uses of an exordium is to prepare the mind of the hearer for the matter to be discussed. If, therefore, the exordium refer only to one of its parts, or to one view only, it will prepare the mind of the hearer for that one part, for that one view only, and not for the rest.

6. An exordium must be *simple*. We would not entirely banish figures: on the contrary, we would always employ such as may render the discourse pleasant and agreeable: but pompous and magnificent expres-

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* Hence *Quintilian* so much insists on his orator being a *good* man; and if this be so needful at the bar, how much more so is it in the pulpit! His conclusion is enough to make many a christian minister blush: Mutos enim nasci, et egere omni ratione satius fuisset, quam providentiæ munera in mutuam perniciem convertere. QUINT. lib. xii. cap. 1.

sions must be avoided, as far as the thing spoken will permit. Do not use a style too elevated, bordering on bombast—nor periods too [artificially] harmonious*—nor over-strained allegories—nor even metaphors too common or too bold; for indeed the hearer's mind, yet cool and in its natural state, can bear nothing of this kind.

7. An exordium must *not be common*. As this is a rule much abused, it will be needful to explain it. By a common exordium, I do not mean an exordium which will suit many texts; for, if the texts are parallel, and the subject be managed with the same views and in the same circumstances, what occasion is there to compose different exordiums?

By a common exordium, I mean, in the first place, one taken from trivial things, and which have been said over and over again; these the people already know, and your labour will be infallibly thrown away. Such are exordiums taken from comparisons of the sun—of kings—of conquerors—of the ancient Romans, &c.—or from some histories of the Old Testament, which have been often repeated—or of some well known types, as the Israelites' passage through the Red Sea—and many more of the same kind.

In the second place, I mean, by a common or general exordium, one which may be alike applied to texts of different matter, or to two contrary interpretations of the same text. It is in this sense that common exordiums are vicious and distasteful.

8. Even in metaphorical or figurative texts, it is quite puerile to make an exordium join the text by a metaphor; for, whatever ingenuity there may seem to be in it, it is certain there is no taste, no judgment discovered in

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* The *harmony* of a period flows from the proper arrangement of the words and sentences, of which the period is composed. "If this science be subject to abuse (and what is not?) does it therefore deserve contempt? If fools and fops sometimes appear in rich and gay attire, that is no reason that a man of sense should be a sloven." MASON'S *Essay on the Power and Harmony of Prosaic Numbers*, ch. x.

the practice; and, however it may pass in college declamations, it would appear too trifling in the pulpit. The exordium, then, must be connected with the text by the matter itself, that is, by the subject intended to be conveyed by the figure, and not by the figure. I would not, however, forbid the joining of the exordium to the text sometimes by the figure, provided it be done in a chaste and prudent manner.*

§ 32. To these rules, I subjoin a word or two on the *vices* of exordiums. 1. There are some preachers who imagine it a fine thing to take exordiums from the persons of their hearers, or the circumstances of the times, places, general affairs, or news of the world: but I believe this is altogether a vicious method, and should never be used but on extraordinary occasions. First, There is too much *affectation* in it. Is it not a vain parade to begin a discourse with things, which have no relation to the matter? It is certainly contrary to the chastity and modesty of a christian pulpit.—Secondly, Exordiums of this sort are usually pulled in by head and shoulders. How should it be otherwise, when the articles, of which they are composed, have, if any, only a very distant relation to the text? By such means you defeat the principal design of an exordium, which is to prepare the hearers' minds, and to conduct them insensibly to the subject. And, finally, it is very difficult in such exordiums to avoid saying impertinencies; for what in a public discourse can be more indelicate than to speak of yourself, or hearers, or times, or news? In my opinion such exordiums ought to be entirely rejected.

2. You must also, for the most part, reject exordiums taken from profane history, or what they call

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* Thus, for example, John vi. 54. "He that eateth my flesh," &c. An exordium to a sermon from this text may be taken from the idea, which holy scripture teaches us of our conversion, as if it were a NEW *birth*, which begins a new life—that for this purpose it speaks of a new *man*—with the same *senses* which nature has formed in us—a mouth to eat the *flesh* and drink the *blood* of the Son of God, in order to nourish us to life eternal.

CLAUDE.

the apothegms of illustrious men. This method savours too much of the college, and is by no means in the taste of pious, well-bred men. Alexander, Cæsar, Pompey, all the great names of antiquity have no business to ascend the pulpit, and, if they are not suffered now-a-days, either in orations in the senate, or in pleas of the bar, much less ought they to be allowed in christian sermons. It may not be amiss, if they appear now and then in the discussion, or in the application; but even there we ought to see them but seldom, not oftener than once a year at most: but to introduce them at the beginning of a sermon is intolerable. I say much the same of citations from profane authors; they must be forborne, unless there be something so particular, so agreeable, and so apt to the text, as to carry its own recommendation along with it.

§ 33. In general, the best exordiums are taken from *theology;* for, as on the one hand, they have alway more relation to the matter of the text, so, on the other, they much better prepare the hearers' minds, being more grave, and free from the puerile pedantries of the college.

In order to *compose* an exordium, after you have well considered the senses of the text, and observed what are the principal matters which ought to enter into the discussion, and after you have made the division, endeavour to reduce the whole to one common idea, and then choose some other idea, naturally connected with that common idea, either immediately, or by means of another. If it be immediately connected with the subject, endeavour to reduce it to one proposition, which may be cleared and proved as you go on; or if it have parts, which require separate explications and proofs, it must be managed so as to include them; and finally, by the natural connection of that proposition with the discussion, enter into the text. If the proposition be connected with the text only remotely, then establish the first, pass on to the second, and so proceed from the second to the text.

Exordiums may be *taken from* almost all the same topics as observations, that is, from *genus*, *species*, *contraries*, &c. For there are but few good exordiums which might not go into the discussion, and which besides are clear, agreeable, and entertaining. A *comparison* may sometimes be employed in an exordium, but not often; nor must trivial comparisons be used, which all the world know, or which are taken from any thing mean; nor must they be embarrassing, taken from things unknown to the people, as those are which are borrowed from mechanics, astronomy, &c. of which the people know nothing at all. *Bible-History* may be used, but sparingly, and the application must be always just, agreeable, and, in some sort, new and remarkable. *Types* may also be employed; but with the same precautions, always consulting good sense and taste.

The best method is to compose several *exordiums for the same text*, by turning your imagination divers ways, by taking it in all its different relations, for by such means you may choose the most proper. But after all these general precepts, which indeed ought to be known, and by which exordiums must be regulated, it is certain, the invention and composition of an exordium can become easy *only by practice*. A young preacher ought not to complain of trouble, nor to be any way negligent in the matter, for he may be sure of succeeding by attention and application.

§ 34. Of the *conclusion*.* The conclusion ought to

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* *Conclusion*. This in a sermon answers to what in an oration is called the *peroration*. It recapitulates, or sums up the strongest and chief arguments, and, by moving the passions, endeavours to persuade the hearers to yield to the force of them.

ARIST. *Rhet.*

The fire of the preacher should blaze here, he should collect the ideas of his whole sermon into this part, as rays are collected in the *focus* of a burning glass, and inflame the hearts of his auditors.

ROB.

Let the peroration, or conclusion, be *short;* let it be bold and *lively;* and let some one or more striking ideas, not mentioned before in the discussion, be reserved for this part, and let it be applied with vigour. *Bucholtzer* used to say, *A good preacher was known by his conclusion*. He frequently concluded his discourse with some such sentence as the following.—Here, my brethren, I stop, I leave the Holy Spirit to preach to you.—Now, christians, be lively and animating, full of great and beautiful figures, aiming to move christian affections—as the love of God—hope—zeal—repentance—self-condemnation—a desire of self-correction—consolation—admiration of eternal benefits—hope of felicity—courage and constancy in afflictions—steadiness in temptations—gratitude to God—recourse to him by prayer—and other such dispositions.*

There are three sorts of dispositions or emotions, the violent—the tender—and the elevated. The *violent* are, for example, indignation, fear, zeal, courage, firmness against temptations, repentance, self-loathing, &c.† The *tender* emotions are joy, consolation, gratitude; tender subjects are pardon, pity, prayer, &c.‡ The *ele-*

I have done my part. May the Lord condescend to do his in your hearts!—I have planted, and watered. May God give the increase!—I have been preaching to you, and setting before you the gospel of salvation. May the Lord God apply it to your hearts, for his glory, and for your eternal felicity!—May the Lord set home to your hearts what I have been preaching!—For my part, I am only his messenger to you. He is the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. KECKERMANNI *Rhet. Eccl.*

* The publisher of *Massillon's* sermons describes, in the preface, the bishop's method of preaching, by saying, that 'What formed the distinct character of father *Massillon's* eloquence was, that all his strokes aimed directly at the *heart*, so that what was simply reason and proof in others was *feeling* in his mouth. Hence the remarkable effects of his instructions: nobody after hearing him stopped to praise, or criticise his sermon. Each auditor retired in a pensive silence, with a thoughtful air, downcast eyes, and composed countenance, carrying away the arrow fastened in his heart. When *Massillon* had preached his first advent at *Versailles*, Lewis xivth. said these remarkable words to him; 'Father, I have heard many fine orators in my chapel, and have been very much pleased with them: but as for you, always when I have heard you, I have been very much displeased with myself.'

Serm. de MASSIL. *pet. car. pref.*

† Example of the *violent* may be seen in *Saurin's* Sermons, vol. i. serm. 9. Eng. On the Severity of God.

‡ *Tender conclusion.* Example of a *tender* conclusion, from a sermon of Bp. *Massillon* to his clergy.—'And, indeed, my brethren, can a pastor live either without prayer, or can he pray but seldom; or can he pray without fervour and zeal, or can he confine all his prayers to a cold, inattentive, and hasty rehersal of his breviary, while he passes his life among his parishoners, and sees the great-

vated are admiration of the majesty of God, the ways of providence, the glory of paradise, the expectation of benefits, &c.*

There are some christian passions which may be excited either by a tender or violent method. Repentance is of this kind, and firmness against temptations; for in each, tender motives may be used as well as violent. St. Paul uses mixed motives at the end of the eighth of Romans. "Who shall separate us from the

est part of them lying in sin, and perishing every day before his eyes? When the high-priest Aaron saw a part of his people smitten by the hand of God, and expiring before him, he ran between the dead and the living—he lifted his hands to heaven—he wept for the misery of such as fell before his eyes—he cried—he wrestled—and his prayer was heard, the plague was stopped, and the sword of God's anger retired. A good pastor never prays for his people in vain. "And Aaron stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed."

This, my brethren, is the image of a good pastor. Amongst his people (as I may say) he walks between the dead and the living. He sees by his side some of his flock dead, and others ready to expire, having only some flattering signs of life. He sees the invisible sword of God's wrath hang over these people; he sees reigning crimes and hastening death. All this he beholds, and it is a spectacle which he has every day before his eyes. If he is not affected with this, he is not a pastor, he is a mercenary wretch, who sees in cold blood the destruction of his flock. He is either a minister fallen from the grace of the priesthood, or one who has never received it. But if this affects him, ah! what must the first motion of his grief and zeal be? He will address himself to God, who wounds and heals—he will open to him secret tears of grief and love to his people—he will remind an angry God of his ancient mercies—he will move his paternal heart by his sighs—and offer himself to be *accursed* (Rom. ix. 3.) for his brethren.—"Aaron stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed."

No, my brethren, a priest, a pastor who does not pray, who does not love prayer, does not belong to that church which *prays without ceasing*. He is not united to the Spirit of prayer and love. He is a dry and barren tree, which cumbers the Lord's ground. He is the enemy, and not the father of his people. He is a stranger who has usurped the pastor's place, and to whom the salvation of the flock is indifferent. Wherefore my brethren, be faithful to prayer, and your functions will be more useful, your people more holy, your labours will seem much sweeter, and the church's evils will diminish. MASSIL. *Disc. Synod. Tom.* ii. *Disc.* 10.

* *Elevated conclusion.* See an example of an elevated conclusion, *Saurin*, vol. iii. Serm. 1. Eng.

love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us! For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.' *

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* *Conclusion may be mixed.* Example of a mixed conclusion from MASSILLON. The annihilation of the soul is the last resource of impiety. But what punishment would it be for a wicked man to be no more? He wishes for annihilation, and proposes it as his highest hope. He lives tranquil in the midst of his pleasures in this agreeable expectation. What! will the just God punish a sinner by giving him what he desires? Ah! it is not thus that God punishes. For what can the wicked find so very bad in annihilation? Would it be the privation of God? But a wicked man does not love him, he does not know him, he will not know him, for his god is himself. Would it be annihilation? But what more pleasing to such a monster, who knows that if he lives after death, it is only to suffer, and expiate the horrors of an abominable life. Would it be the loss of worldly pleasures, and of all the objects of his passions? But when he ceases to be, he must cease to live. Imagine if you can a more desirable lot for the wicked, and shall this after all be the sweet end of his debaucheries, horrors and blasphemies!

No, my brethren, *the hope of the wicked shall perish:* but his crimes shall not perish with him. His torments will be as endless as his pleasures would have been, if he had been master of his fate. He would fain perpetuate upon earth his sensual pleasures; death limits his crimes, but does not limit his criminal desires. The just Judge, who searches the heart, will proportion then the suffering to the offence; immortal flames for intentionally immortal pleasures, and eternity itself will only be a just compensation, and an equality of punishment. *These shall go away into everlasting punishment.*

What is the conclusion of this discourse?—That a wicked man is to be pitied for placing his highest hope in a frightful uncertainty about revealed truths. He is to be pitied, in that he is not able to live peaceably, unless he lives without faith, without worship, without God, without hope—that he is to be pitied if the gospel must be a fable, the faith of all ages credulity, the consent of all men a popular error, the first principles of nature and reason childish prejudices, the blood of so many martyrs, whom the hope of a futurity supported in torments, a concerted scheme to deceive mankind; the conversion of the universe a human enterprize, the accomplishment of prophecies a lucky hit; in one word, if all

A conclusion should be *diversified.** I mean, we should not be content to move one single christian passion; many must be touched, and a proper length of discourse assigned to each, in order to stir up the passion. Too long time, however, must not be spent; but when the effect is evidently produced, pass to another passion. As the conclusion ought to be composed at least of four or five reflections, (naturally arising from the text, either general, from the whole text, or particular, from some of the parts; into which it is divided) so, if possible, these reflections must be placed in prudent order, so that the weakest and least powerful may be the first, and the strongest last, and so that the discourse may become more rapid as it runs.

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that is best established in the universe must be found false, so that he may not be eternally miserable. What madness to be able to contrive a kind of tranquillity made up of so many foolish suppositions?

O man! *I will shew you a more excellent way.* Fear this futurity, which you force yourself to doubt. Ask us no more what passes in that other life, of which we speak: but ask yourself frequently what you are doing in this. Calm your conscience by the innocence of your manners, and not by the impiety of your sentiments. Set your heart at rest by calling upon God, and not by doubting whether he sees you. The peace of the wicked is only a frightful despair; seek your happiness, not in shaking off the yoke of faith, but in tasting how sweet it is. Practice the maxims it prescribes, and your reason will no longer refuse to submit to the mysteries it proposes. Futurity will cease to be incredible to you, when you cease to live like those that confine all their felicity within the bounds of life. Then far from fearing the futurity, you will hasten to it in desire, you will sigh after the happy day, when the Son of Man, the Father of the world to come, will appear to punish infidels, and to receive into his kingdom all such as have lived in expectation of a blessed immortality.

Massil. Ser. Car. Tom. i.

* The Archbishop of *Cambray*, that fine, cool reasoner in his other works, is remarkable for this fire in his sermons, particularly in the conclusion of them.

The following rules for obtaining *facility of speaking*, and a few remarks on the *manner of preaching*, may not appear an unsuitable close to this work.

As to the *first* of these, ' Do not content yourself with *general* knowledge: but endeavour to settle in your mind the genuine notion of all the doctrines and duties of religion. If you be thus *master of the subject*, you will be able to speak readily and dis-

I think, however, it would be vicious to finish with motives too violent, as subjects tending to horror—indignation—or heavy censure. It would be much better in general to close with a tender, or even with an elevating motive. Different motives may be (and indeed they ought to be) mixed in the same conclusion, that is, violent, tender and elevated, in order to stir up many passions of different kinds.

Conclusion sometimes delights in examples, similitudes, short and weighty sentences, the inventions of a fine imagination, and, in one word, it need not be so regular as the body of the sermon, where more accuracy must be observed. There is no danger when a preacher in a conclusion gives himself up to the fire of

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tinctly on all occasions. Want of clearness of speaking generally ariseth from a defect of clear thinking.—*Be much in the study of the scriptures;* this will furnish you with *matter*, and it will give your *style* a tincture, that will render it more acceptable to the pious.—Converse with the writings of those practical, pressing, *awakening* divines, who speak most naturally to the souls of men. Here you will acquire the best sort of pulpit eloquence.—*Preach constantly.* Frequency will render the work easy to be performed by yourself, and what is so will be more easy to be understood by the hearers. *Glanvil's Essay on Preaching*, Part I.

Manner of preaching, says Mr. ROBINSON, is known to be an article of great consideration to auditors; divines, therefore, who write on the subject, never fail to exhort preachers to acquire an agreeable manner of delivering their discourses. Cardinal *Borromeo*, who was also archbishop of *Milan*, drew up a plan of preaching for the use of the clergy of his diocese, and very properly; having first given instructions concerning the *matter*, or the doctrine of a sermon, he treats of what we call manner, under the article *form*, by which he means style, elocution, voice, action, and whatever else may belong to expressing and delivering a sermon:

Elocutionis genus *exquisitum* ne affectet—*fucum* omnem fugiat—imperitæ *multitudinis* consuetudinem loquendi ne sequatur—verba *antiqua* et *peregrina* fugiat—*fati, fortunæ, infortunii* nomina, aliaque ejus generis omnino cavebit—*Epithetorum* item nimium usum, et *poeticum* dicendi genus ne consectetur—anicularum non adhibeat *proverbia*—ejusdem rei *repetitionem* vitet.—Cum de peccatis, ad luxuriam pertinentibus, agit, cautionem adhibeat, ne imprudens in *obscæna* verba incidat—videat ne loquendo turpes *cogitationes* injiciat—*adulationis* verba omnino fugiat—*ambitiosum* dicendi genus caveat.—Ne *ambigue*, ne *concise* item, ut auditores incerti sint, ne *obscure* loquatur—*vocem* et *actionem* ita temperare his genius, provided he says nothing extravagant, or capricious, nothing that savours of enthusiasm, or declamation.

concionator conabitur, ut non ex arte petere, sed vere, et ex *natura* dicere videatur—non importunè *suggestum palmis* feriat: sed cum rei magnitudo poscit—non per suggestum quasi *volitabit*, nunc ex hoc, nunc ex illo angulo prosiliens.—*Rectus* in suggestu stet—ne *nares* corruget—ne *labra* lambat—ne *mentum* pectori affigat—ne *brachium* tanquam gladiator immoderate projiciat—ne *tussiat*, ne *expuat* crebro, nisi necessitate coactus—ne in eloquendo per *nares* majorem spiritus partem effundat—ne crebro *anhelitu*, &c.

Borromei *Pastorum Instructiones, Cap. de form. &c.*

THE END

AN

APPENDIX,

DIRECTING TO

A PROPER CHOICE OF BOOKS

FOR THE

CHRISTIAN PREACHER's LIBRARY.

Till I come, give attendance to reading. 1 TIM. iv. 13.

APPENDIX.

THE

PREACHER's LIBRARY.

§ 1. Introduction. The ill choice of books a great defect in the conduct of study. § 2. Many books are continually superseded by others more perfect. § 3. A remedy proposed. (I) PREPARATORY books, that give a particular account of authors and their works. § 4. Catalogues. § 5. Bibliothecas. § 6. Periodical publications. § 7. Books useful to form a judgment of authors. § 8. (II.) BIBLICAL authors, that give immediate assistance for studying the scriptures. § 9. Good editions of the Bible, especially in the originals. Polyglotts. § 10. The Old Testament, Hebrew. § 11. The Greek Septuagint. § 12. The New Testament, Greek. § 13. English Bible. § 14. Other modern versions. § 15. Books immediately preparatory for understanding the scriptures. § 16. Hebrew lexicons and concordances. § 17. Greek lexicons and concordances. § 18. English dictionaries and concordances. § 19. Commentators on the whole scriptures. § 20. On the whole New Testament. § 21. On select parts both of the Old and New Testament. § 22. On select parts of the Old Testament only. § 23. And of the New Testament only. § 24. (III.) THEOLOGICAL works, both systematic and miscellaneous. And first, public confessions and catechisms. § 25. Latin systems of divinity. § 26. Also English. § 27. English *practical* writers.—Puritans. § 28. Nonconformists. § 29. Episcopalians. § 30. Scotch. § 31. Americans. § 32. Sermons that excel, as models of composition. § 33. (IV.) ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, including biography, chronology, rites, and antiquities.—And first, of the Old Testament church. § 34. Histories of the christian church. § 35. of some parts of the christian history. § 36. Biography. § 37. Chronology. § 38. Antiquities. § 39. (V.) Books that treat of the PASTORAL CARE, and PUBLIC SPEAKING. —And first, of the pastoral care. § 40. Of public speaking, in general. § 41. Of preaching, in particular. § 42. Books in which eloquence is eminently exemplified. § 43. (VI.) MISCELLANEOUS books. And first, evidences of revealed religion. § 44. Moral science. § 45. Natural science. § 46. Civil history. § 47. Poetry and music.

§ 1. A LEARNED author very justly remarks, that one great defect, in the conduct of study is the '*ill choice of books;*' and yet perhaps is of all others the '*most common fault.*' Many persons read any thing they light upon, and to them the *cheapest* books are the most valuable. In most *Sales* the purchasers had much better give ten times the money they pay for books, to be without them; for, in addition to the price, the time spent in reading them, which is far more important, is all thrown away. Besides, to be too much engaged in reading or consulting worthless books, tends to misguide the reader, to spoil his taste, and corrupt his language. It is the business of a student to peruse the *best books*, on every subject, and to employ himself on *those only*.

§ 2. Many books, which, at the time of their first publication, were very proper to be read, because the most valuable of their kind, are now comparatively useless; for others have been since published on the same subjects, which are much superior with regard to the matter, method, and language; which correct their mistakes, supply their defects, and advance much farther towards perfection. Consequently, it is egregious trifling to spend time and pains upon the former, to the neglect of the latter.*

* See CLARKE's Essay on Study, page 115.

§ 3. (I.) To remedy in some degree, this too common evil, procure the best PREPARATORY books, that give a particular account of authors, and their publications. These are principally either *Catalogues*, or *Bibliothecas*.

§ 4. One of the first inquiries of an economical student, when a book is well recommended to him, is, What is the *price* of it? And as he may be so situated, that he can have no other information than from books, the best step he can take is to procure such *Catalogues* or *Lists* of books as contain the prices of them. Of this nature is,

BENT'S London Catalogue of books, with their sizes, and prices, thin 8vo. Of this no doubt, there will be successive editions, with improvements. It contains only the *principal* books published in London, from the beginning of the 18th century.

Other *catalogues*, which are often circulated by town and country booksellers, sometimes contain books which cannot be had in the more common mode of application; and, by comparing them together, the usual price of most books may be soon learnt, making due allowance for the binding, and especially the EDITION. This last is a circumstance which deserves peculiar attention.

The *General Index* to the Monthly Review, 8vo. Lond. 1786, and 1799, exhibits the state of English literature for about forty years; that is, from 1749, when the review commenced, to 1790: and one part of the work contains the title of every publication reviewed in that period, with the *price* under the different classes of literature. This also, no doubt, will be continued.

HARWOOD'S *View of the different editions of the Classics*, 12mo. Lond. 1778, contains also an account of the best editions of the Septuagint, Greek Testament, and Christian Fathers, both Greek and Latin, with occasional remarks, and references to the prices.

DR. ADAM CLARKE'S *Bibliographical Dictionary* contains a chronological account, alphabetically arranged, of the most curious, scarce, useful, and important books in all departments of literature, which have been published in Latin, Greek, Coptic, Hebrew, Samaritan, Syriac, Chaldee, Æthiopic, Arabic, Persian, Armenian, &c. from the infancy of printing to the beginning of the nineteenth century: With biographical anecdotes of authors, printers, and publishers; and a distinct notation of the Editiones principes et optimæ. 6 vols. small 8vo.

This extensive compilation contains also the *price* of each article (where it could be ascertained) from the best London catalogues, and public sales of the most valuable libraries, both at home and abroad. It includes the whole of the 4th Ed. of Dr HARWOOD's View of the classics, with innumerable additions and amendments.

The Bibliographical Miscellany is a supplement to the above noticed work in 2 vols. small 8vo. It contains, principally, An account of the English TRANSLATION of all the Greek and Roman CLASSICS, and ecclesiastical writers—a List of Arabic and Persian Grammars, Lexicons, &c. —A Treatise on the knowledge and love of Books—and several bibliographical Systems.

In point of tasty appearance, as well as real utility, this work might be greatly improved in a future edition. One circumstance must strike most readers, that it would be a great improvement for the NAME of *each* author to be placed prominently in the middle of the page, immediately preceding the list of his works, as in the articles HOMER and CICERO.

§ 5. For an extensive acquaintance with books, especially when a taste for what is useful and solid is in a good degree formed, and the judgment is not liable to be unduly influenced by specious titles, *Bibliothecas* may be consulted with great advantage. And it will naturally occur, that when a sentiment or character of a work is given, the connections and opinions, as well as the taste of the party, should be taken into the account. In this class of Bibliothecas the following will be useful, and most of them are easily procured:

CAVEI *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum* Historia Literaria, 2 vols. fol. Oxon. 1740, is a work of great value. To a sketch of the lives of literary characters in every age, from the birth of Christ to Martin Luther, is added a list of publications, both genuine and spurious, attributed to them.

CAVEI *Chartophylax Ecclesiasticus*, 8vo. Lond. 1685, is an abridgment of the former work.

Dupin's *Bibliotheca Patrum*, or history of ecclesiastical writers, commonly bound in 8 vols. fol. Lond. 1697 and 1725, begins with a brief account of the writers of the Holy Scriptures, and descends with the ecclesiastical writers of after ages, in a regular series, and more at large, to the close of the 17th century. He sometimes gives a very minute account of works and even an abridgment of them. It sells low, as may be seen in catalogues. Were the translation of this work amended, the matter in many places abridged, and the whole well arranged, with a continuation to the close of the 18th century, judicious notes, and good indices, it would be a great acquisition to the christian student.—How far the following work, if continued to the present time, or at least to the end of the last century, will prove a sufficient substitute for that now mentioned, must be left to the judgment of each reader who has opportunity to examine and reflect. It is to be hoped that the learned author's favourable specimen will be followed by other volumes.

Dr. A. **Clarke's** Concise View of the Succession of Sacred Literature, in a chronological arrangement of Authors, and their works, from the invention of Alphabetical characters to the year of our Lord 345.

Wolfii *Bibliotheca Hebræa*, 3 vols. 4to. Hamburgi and Lipsiæ, 1715—1727, which the author also calls 'Bibliotheca Judaica, et Antijudaica, is by no means confined to Jewish authors, but takes ample scope amongst eminent christian writers of all nations, who profess to assist the student in the knowledge of the Old Testament.

Bishop **Wilkins's** List, in his discourse on The Gift of preaching, though large, is now unsatisfactory; yet it may afford some amusement and information, especially his list of 'Commentators upon the books of scripture.' The books which he recommends as '*Bibliothecas*, or such as give a particular account of authors, their *works*, *subjects*, *editions*, *&c.* are about thirteen, including protestant and catholic writers, but are now of little use.

Bishop **Watson's** *Collection of Theological Tracts*, in 6 vols. 8vo. Camb. 1785, contains a large catalogue of books in divinity, without any classification of subjects, and including but a very small proportion of orthodox and practical writers.

Baxter's *Christian Directory*, often sold apart, as complete of itself, and forming the first vol. of his practical works, 4 vols. fol. Lond. 1707, contains a list of books, which he calls the *Poor Man's Library;* but, notwithstanding its diminutive title, it forms an ample collection of old divinity.

§ 6. Modern *reviews* will, of course, be consulted about recent publications. What was mentioned in the first edition of this work as a *desideratum*, "A good *Review* conducted on principles favourable to evangelical doctrines and a devotional taste," has been since realized, in a desirable measure, by the following work:

The *Eclectic Review*, the reputation of which, in point of literary eminence, appears to be progressively gaining on the public mind.

The *Monthly Review* has maintained, in general, a considerable share of *literary* reputation; but theology, of late, occupies only a very small part of it, which perhaps is a favourable circumstance.

The *Monthly Magazine* is, on the whole, an entertaining miscellany, but is here noticed chiefly on account of its offering to the public 'a correct and complete list of all new publications within the month.' And curiosity will be gratified by its 'notices of works in hand, domestic and foreign.' But it sometimes contains papers of an execrable tendency, perhaps too barefaced to meet with countenance from any but a few of the most sceptical readers, who neither have, nor desire to have, any settled principles either of religion or morals.

§ 7. There are other books which may be of considerable service in forming a *judgment* of authors and their works; such as

The *General Biographical Dictionary*, 12 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1790; in which most, though not all celebrated authors, of all ages and nations, are noticed, with some account of their works.

Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, 3 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1796, contain just criticisms on the various excellencies and defects of the most celebrated writers of antiquity, and of many moderns.

Rapin's critical works, translated by Kennet, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1731,—or, the same work, French, 3 vols. 12mo. Amst. 1693,—1695, is conducted on a most improving plan, that of comparing the discriminating excellencies of similar authors, with subsequent *reflections* on the subjects of which they treat.

Fenelon's *Dialogues on Eloquence*, and *Letter to the French Academy*, (of which an improved London edition has been lately published by **Baynes**,) though small in bulk, is rich in taste and accurate criticism. Vid Christ. Preacher, p. 20.

Rollin's *Method of Study*, 4 vols. 12mo. Lond. pursues the same general taste and amiable spirit with the preceding, diversified by their application to a greater number of authors and subjects.

Lardner's *Works*, 11 vols. 8vo. 1788, which not only contain an alphabetical catalogue of authors, sects, and writings, whose history is written, and from which extracts are made by him; but also form a sort of *Bibliotheca*, full of curious and useful information, on the subject of ancient-writers, and their works.

§ 8. (II.) Having pointed out some of the most advantageous *helps* for understanding the price, editions, and characters of books in general, I now proceed to recommend some of the most valuable books for a divinity student, under the different classes of literature. And those which claim the first and chief notice, are such as concern the study of the SACRED SCRIPTURES.

§ 9. The first care of a preacher should be to understand his *bible;* and for this purpose he would do well to procure *good editions* of the sacred volume in the *originals*.

Walton's *Polyglott*, 6 vols. fol. Lond. 1657, is the most complete biblical apparatus in any language. Besides most valuable *Prolegomena*, philological, chronological, geographical, &c. it contains the original texts, with Arias Montanus's interlineary version; the Samaritan Pentateuch and Chaldee paraphrases; the Septuagint, the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic and Persic versions, with Latin literal translations, and the Latin vulgate.

The *Complutensian Bible*, or Polyglott, 6 tom. fol. 1515, published by Cardinal Ximenes, in Spain, contains the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and the Targum upon the Pentateuch, with a Latin interpretation.

The *King of Spain's* Bible, or Polyglott, 8 tom. fol. Antwerp, 1559—1572, contains the Hebrew text, the Septuagint, the Chaldee paraphrase, and vulgate, with a Latin translation of the Septuagint, and for the New Testament, the original Greek, the vulgate and Syriac versions, together with a Latin translation of the Syriac; besides an interlineary version of Pagninus reformed, by A. Montanus, and a large Apparatus: all very elegantly and correctly printed. Walton says, that Robert Stephens was the author of the annotations.

VATABLUS's Edition of the Old Testament, 2 vols. fol. Heidelb. 1586—1599—1616, contains the Hebrew, Septuagint, Latin vulgate, and Pagninus's version, with annotations, and the Apocrypha.

The *King of France's* Bible, sometimes called Biblia Lutetiana, Heptaglotta, and Polyglotta le Jay, Heptapla Regia, et Biblia Polyglotta Parisiensia, Paris, 10 vols. fol. 1628—1645, contains all that is in the king of Spain's edition, except the interlineary Bible, and the Apparatus, but with the addition of the Samaritan Pentateuch, and a translation of it, a Syriac translation of the Old Testament, and an Arabic translation of the whole Bible, with Latin translations to each of them: on which Bishop Wilkins remarks: 'A very pompous, magnificent work, and might have been more useful, had the *correctors* bestowed as much diligence and skill, as the *publishers* did cost.'

ARIAS MONTANUS, fol. 1528, and Geneva, 1619, has the Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament, with an interlineary version, as literal as possible, which is Pagninus's a little altered. This is a work much esteemed, and of low price;—it is found entire in Walton's Polyglott.*

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* For a more particular account of WALTON's and other Polyglotts, as well as the various editions of the Hebrew Bible, see WOLFII Bibliotheca Hebræa, vol. ii. p. 338, et sequent. And especially Dr. A. CLARKE's Bibliographical Dictionary, vol. i. p. 246, &c.

Bishop WILKINS remarks, 'That the Chaldee Paraphrases, commonly called the Targum, in the historical books, do, for the most part render the true sense of the original; but that of the Hagiographa is exceeding full of mistakes, and seldom comes near the right meaning. The Arabic translation hath been formerly published only for some parts of the Bible, as the Pentateuch, and the Psalms, (though since published for the whole bible, in the French Polyglott) and is by some learned men rejected, as being ignorantly done, not from the original, but out of some other

The author hopes it will not be deemed an act of presumption, nor foreign from the nature of this publication, here to insert, what he has contemplated, for many years, as an important DESIDERATUM—

A BRITANNIC POLYGLOTT BIBLE.

He conceives, that the present commendable taste for biblical studies, is highly favourable to the encouragement of such a design. No doubt can be entertained but that there may be found gentlemen who, in point of learning, are fully adequate to such a work; and it appears more than probable that, by subscriptions and other patronage, pecuniary resources would not be wanting.

Some of the important advantages proposed are the following:

1. Here would be found the most unexceptionable copies of the originals, which might be considered as the standard of the numerous translations which the British and Foreign Bible Society, and other societies connected with Great Britain, are contemplating.

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translation, and by some corrupt copy.—The Syriac hath been esteemed as genuine and faithful;—that of the New Testament is of good antiquity and esteem; but was heretofore defective in some books, which have been supplied by Dr. POCOCK. 'The Latin Vulgate,' continues the same author, 'commonly, but without foundation, ascribed to St. JEROME, is unreasonably extolled by the catholics; but others are more esteemed by protestants, as that of Pægninus, 1523, altered by Arias Montanus, in the interlineary bible. And especially what is in most common use amongst us is that of Junius and Tremellius, which is executed with great fidelity and judgment. And those of ERASMUS and BEZA on the New Testament are of good repute. That of Castlio, first published 1551, though elaborate, has too much affectation of elegance.

'The English translations by TINDALE and MATTHEWS, in reign of Henry VIII. were not so much from the original Hebrew and Greek, as from some Latin version, and therefore are not esteemed of any great authority. Those of greatest repute are,—The Geneva translation, finished there by some English exiles, in Queen Mary's time, and published 1560:—The Bishop's Bible, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, by Archbishop PARKER and others:—That which is now in common use, called the King's Bible, because executed by order of the king, James I. is, upon the whole, in high and deserved estimation.'

2. Here would be found the *result* of all the learned investigations, both English and Foreign, since the date of WALTON's Polyglott, both of the original texts and the ancient versions, without the encumbrance of bulk and expence producing that result.

3. Here would be found ample *specimens*, (which for the use intended are quite sufficient,) of all the Targums, and of ancient and modern versions, whether Asiatic, European, or American; which might not only excite a laudable curiosity to become more extensively acquainted with the various forms under which the best book in the world has appeared; but, which is much more important, might serve, as a clue, to facilitate the dissemination of the sacred records among all the inhabitants of the globe.

4. By a quarto form, and a regular arrangement of columns, the same text would appear to the eye at once, and prove an irresistible impulse to consult all the parts without loss of time, and with little trouble. This point is but imperfectly effected by any former Polyglott; and therefore even those who have access to them could not fail to consult this, first, as a common study bible.

5. If under the patronage of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and of the dignified clergy and nobility of our land, (in addition to the other subscribers for copies,) a *Stereotype* of the work could be obtained, a great saving of the article of paper would be secured. In that case, no more copies need be printed than are subscribed for; and future editions would be *equally correct* with little trouble.

6. By retaining the sacred text and versions *exclusively* there would be a great saving of expence, compared with other Polyglotts. In the present state of literature, various apparatus, grammars, Lexicons, &c. are so numerous, that it would not be necessary to encumber the work with any of them. And the same might be observed of the *Variæ Lectiones*. By this means an elegant symmetry might be observed through the whole work, and it might be consulted with the same ease and pleasure as a common bible.

As utility rather than splendour would be considered, the letter in each department should be rather small, though the best of the kind, so as to make 8. 4to vols. (two parts each) about the size of Rees's Cyclopædia.

A DESIDERATUM FOR

THE BRITANNIC

THE OLD

Engl. Text.	Hebr. Text.	Liter. Vers.
BLAYNEY'S EDITION CORRECTED.	VANDER HOOGHT'S.	MONTANUS'S.

THE NEW

Engl. Text.	Greek Text.	Liter. Vers.
BLAYNEY'S EDITION CORRECTED.	GRIESBACH'S.	MONTANUS'S.

BIBLICAL STUDENTS.

POLYGLOTT BIBLE.

TESTAMENT.

Septuagint.	Vulgate.	Pantaglotta.
CARAFA'S, BY HOLMES.	DIDOT'S EDITION, 1785.	*Gen.* Samarit. *Exod.* Targ. Onk. *Lev.* Do. Ben. Uz. *Num.* Do. Jerus. *Deut* Persic. *Jos.* Targ. Jonath. Arabic, Syriac, Ethiopic, &c. &c.

TESTAMENT.

Syriac Vers.	Vulgate.	Pantaglotta.
SCHAAF'S ED. 1717.	DIDOT'S EDITION, 1785.	*Matt.* Coptic. *Mark.* Germ. *Luke.* French. *John.* Italian. *Acts.* Spanish. *Romans.* Flem. Swedish, Bohemian, Polish, &c. &c.

I have reason to think that there are some hundreds in our country who would feel a deep interest in such a design. However, a judicious PROSPECTUS would soon determine what degree of encouragement might be expected. The *Pantaglotta* part might prove greatly subservient to the grand design of Bible Societies; and a source of peculiar gratification to many individuals who wish to form some acquaintance with any of these languages. A few Psalms, a Prophecy, a Gospel, or an Epistle, here exhibited as a fair *specimen* of a language, might enable a student, in many cases, to form a predilection for one or more languages unknown to him before, and consequently to procure further aids in such languages.

§ 10. Next to a good Polyglott must be classed the other *best editions* of the Holy Scriptures, in the original Hebrew and Greek. Among the best editions of the Old Testament in *Hebrew* are the following:

KENNICOTT's Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum cum variis lectionibus, 2 vols. fol. 1780,— nd

HOUBIGANT's *Biblia Hebraica, cum notis criticis*, in 4 vols. fol. are expensive works, and are chiefly sought and valued by professed critics, for the sake of the *Variæ Lectiones*.

EVERARD VANDER HOOGHT's Biblia Hebraica variis notis illustrata, 2 vols. 8vo. Amstel. et Ultraj. 1705, is generally esteemed the standard of correctness. The steps taken to secure this important point are mentioned in the preface, which is well calculated to make a favourable and pleasing impression on a mind in love with critical accuracy.

Biblia Hebraica, secundum editionem Belgicam EVERARD VANDER HOOGHT, collatis aliis bonæ notæ Codicibus, una cum versiône Latina SEBASTIANI SCHMIDII, 4to. Lips. 1740, may be considered as the best substitute for the preceding ones. Or,

Biblia Hebraica, ad optimas quasque editiones expressa, cum notis masorethicis, et Capitibus, et versibus, necnon singulorum Capitum summariis Latinis; by CHRISTIAN REINECCIUS, 4to. Lips. 1739.

Various editions of the Hebrew text have been published by

—**Plantine**, in fol. 4to. and 8vo. with and without points;—R. **Stephens**, in 4to. and 16mo.; the first a fair, large character, the other very elegant and correct;—**Hutter**, Hamb. 1587, in a fair and elegant character, distinguishing the radical and servile, the deficient and quiescent letters:—**Buxtorf**, 1618, with rabbinical notes and comments.—**Athias**, **Leusden**, and **Simon**, have published esteemed editions.—**Bayley**, 4 vols. 8vo. with the English on the opposite page.

§ 11. As the apostles and evangelists made much use of the *Greek Septuagint*, it has ranked high among the ancient versions. Some of the best editions of it are the following:

Grabe's edition of the Septuagint, in 4 vols. thin fol. often bound in 2, Oxon. 1707, is in great repute. It was also published in 8 vols. 8vo.

Breitinger's edition of the same work, in 4 vols. 4to. Tiguri, 1730.

Bos's edition of the Septuagint, in 2 vols. 4to. commonly bound in one, Franc. 1709. This contains learned Prolegomena, the Scholia of the Vatican edition, variæ lectiones, and the apocrypha.

Daniel's edition, which is much esteemed, 8vo. Lond. 1653—Or, **Mill**'s, 12mo. Amstel. 1725.—Or Bishop **Pearson**'s, printed by Field, 12mo. Cantab. 1665, may be admitted as a substitute.

§ 12. Among the best editions of the *Greek Testament* are the following:

Millii Novum Testamentum Græcum, cum lectionibus variantibus MSS. with very elaborate *prolegomena*, &c. fol. Oxon. 1707; or, the same by **Kuster**, Roterod. 1710, revised and improved.

Wetsteini Novum Testamentum Græcum, editionis receptæ cum lectionibus variantibus codicum MSS. &c. 2 vols. fol. Amstel, 1752.—These two works are splendid and expensive. The following are more within the reach of common libraries.

Bengelii Novum Testamentum Græcum, with various readings, a critical apparatus, parallel places, &c. 4to. Tubingæ, 1734. This text, without the apparatus, but with the *var. lect.* and parallel references, was republished in 8vo. Stutgard, 1734, with only one *erratum*, and that a wrong accent.

ELZIVIR's editions in 12mo. are in great repute, especially that of 1624.

WETSTEIN's Novum Testamentum, 1711, 1735, is valuable, nor merely for beauty and correctness, but also for the *Canones Critici*, *Prolegomena*, *Notæ Criticæ*, various readings, and scriptural references.

SMYTEGELT's edition, 1675, is beautiful, and small for the pocket.

The curious, who wish to see a syllabus of almost all the editions of the Holy Scriptures in the originals, and principal versions, to the beginning of this century, may consult **LE LONG**'s **BIBLIOTHECA SACRA**, 8vo. Lipsiæ, 1709, and Dr. A. **CLARKE**'s Bibliographical Dictionary.

§ 13. It would be tedious and unnecessary to enter into a detail of translations and editions of the *English* Bible. As an instructive and entertaining substitute for this, the reader is referred to

LEWIS's 'Complete history of the several translations of the Holy Bible and New Testament into English, both in MSS. and print; and the most remarkable editions of them since the invention of printing,' Lond. 1739.

Since the publication of that work, several *translations* have been made of separate parts of the sacred scriptures, by **DODDRIDGE**, **LOWTH**, **BLAYNEY**, **NEWCOME**, **HARWOOD**, **CAMPBELL**, **WAKEFIELD**, **HAWEIS**, **GEDDES**, &c. &c. &c. but as most of them stand connected with *Expositions* of the parts translated, and these are of merit *extremely various*, they claim, in this place, no farther notice.

NEWCOME's View of English Biblical translations, 8vo. in addition to the preceding, will complete all the information, at present necessary for any biblical student.

Among the innumerable *editions* of the English Bible, the following are recommended:

BARKER's edition, 4to. London, 1603, 'with most profitable annotations upon all hard places, and other things of great importance.'

James **WATSON**'s edition, 8vo. Edin. 1722.

John **Field**'s edition, small 8vo. Lond. 1660.
William **Pine**'s edition, pocket size, Bristol, 1774.
J. W. **Pasham**'s edition, very small, Lond. 1776.

For accuracy of printing, the Oxford edition of 1769, superintended by Dr. **Blayney**, Regius Professor of Hebrew, at Oxford, is much esteemed. The valued correctness extends not merely to the text, but also to the contents of the chapters, the marginal renderings and references, chronological dates, &c. Yet, after all its boasted correctness, a pretty long list of *errata* has been discovered in it by those who have examined it with care.

For constant use, an 8vo. Bible, with marginal references, (in one vol. or two, with or without the apocrypha and common prayer, at pleasure,) will be most convenient. And commonly the Oxford editions are the best.

§ 14. *Other modern versions* of the Bible may be noticed in this connection.

J. F. **Ostervald**'s edition of the French Bible, 8vo. 1771, is valuable on account of the arguments prefixed to each book, and the reflections at the end of each chapter.

The *Cambridge* edition of the *Welsh* Bible, by Joseph Bentham, large 8vo. 1746, is a very excellent one. Of late a Stereotype edition of this version has been published under the patronage of the "British and Foreign Bible Society."

Peter **Williams**'s edition, 4to. Carmarthen, 1779, (including a Welsh Concordance) is, in many respects, a good one; though supposed to contain, in two or three passages of the reflections at the end of the chapters, a tincture of Sabellianism.

Bishop **Bedel**'s edition of the *Irish* Bible, Lond. small size, 1690, is reckoned a good one.

§ 15. Works immediately *preparatory* to understanding the scriptures are of the utmost importance.

Walton's *Prolegomena*, prefixed to his Polyglott, before mentioned, are a learned and ample treasure on this head.

Prittii Introductio ad lectionem Novi Testamenti, in qua quæ rem criticam historiam, chronologiam, et geographiam pertinent breviter et perspicue exponuntur, 8vo. Lipsiæ, 1704, and a fourth edition in 1737. Of this work Bishop **Watson** says, 'I have never met with any book superior to this as an introduction to the New Testament.

Collyer's sacred Interpreter, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1726. &c. is professedly a practical introduction towards a beneficial reading of the Bible; it treats of the chief historical events of the four great monarchies, of the Jewish church to the taking of Jerusalem, and of the design of each book of the Pentateuch, Prophets, Gospels, &c.

Gray's Key to the Old Testament, 8vo. is well recommended by persons of different theological sentiments.

Jones's (Jeremiah) new and full method of settling the canonical authority of the New Testament, 3 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1726, &c. stands in high repute.

Allix's *Reflections on the Books of the Holy Scriptures*, 2 vols. Lond. 1688. This work is republished in Bishop Watson's Theological Tracts.

Beausobre et L'Enfant's Introduction to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, intended chiefly for young students in divinity, 4to. Lond. 1784. 'This is a work of great merit, (says Bishop Watson, in his tracts, where it is republished,) the authors have not left any topic untouched, on which the young student in divinity may be supposed to want information.'

Fleury's Manners, Customs, Laws, Polity, and Religion of the Israelites, is a pleasing and instructive little volume. Bishop Horne, says of it, "It is an excellent introduction to the reading of the Old Testament and should be put into the hands of every young person." An improved edition of it has been published by Dr. A. Clarke, 1802.

Simon's Critical History of the Old and New Testament, 2 vols. 8vo. is a work of long-established reputation. It was first published in French, about 1678, but has been since translated into different languages.

Campbell's Preliminary Dissertations to his new translation of the Gospels, 2 vols. 4to. possess various excellencies, and rectify some considerable mistakes in Father Simon's critical History.

Michaelis's Introductory Lectures to the sacred Books of the New Testament, 4to. Lond. 1761; or with notes, by Marsh, 3 vols. 8vo. 1793. Michaelis treats of the genuine antiquity, the language, readings, manuscripts, and principal editions of the New Testament; also of the marks of distinction, aspirations and accents, the ancient versions, and the divine inspiration of the books.

Lowman's Rationale of the Hebrew Ritual, 8vo. Lond. is much esteemed.

Levi's account of Jewish ceremonies, 8vo. Lond. is the production of a modern Jew.

Harwood's new Introduction to the Study and Knowledge of the New Testament, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1773, may be read with advantage, making allowances for his Theological sentiments.

Weem's works, 4 vols. 4to. Lond. 1636, contain much valuable information; especially his Christian Synagogue and exercitations. They sell very low.

Lowth's Lectures on the sacred poetry of the Hebrews, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1787, translated from the Latin, by Dr. **Gregory**, to which are added, the principal notes of Professor **Michaelis**, &c. abound with valuable information and elegant criticism.

Leusden's Philologus Hebræus, Philologus Hebræo-Græcus generalis, et Philologus Hebræo-mixtus, una cum Spicilegio Philologico, 4to. Basileæ, 1739, is a work full of curious and useful information on biblical subjects.

Huetii *Demonstratio Evangelica*, fol. Paris, 1690. There is also a 4to. edition. Bishop **Watson**, observes, 'This is a methodical work, replete with erudition.' *Huetius's* own words are very remarkable: 'Probari potest religionis Christianæ veritas eo genere demonstrationis quod non minus certum est quam demonstrationes ipsæ geometricæ.' Yet the same learned pen testifies, 'Cui fidem largitus est Deus, probationes non requirit; qui fide caret, nulla illi sufficit demonstratio.' In this work the author endeavours to prove the truth of sacred history by shewing, that all the heathen mythology proceeds from divine revelation, changed, disguised, and falsified.

Keach's Key to Scripture Metaphors, fol. Lond. is a work which a judicious preacher may consult with profit, bu which a common-place declaimer will never fail to abuse.

Pere **Lamy**'s *Apparatus Biblicus;* or, an Introduction to the Holy Scriptures, translated from the French, with notes and additions, illustrated with copper-plates, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1728.

Glassii *Philologia Sacra*, 4to. Lips. 1743, 1776, a **Dathio**, treats of the style and literature, as well as the sense and doctrine of the whole Bible. It was first published in 1623.

Buxtorfii Patris Synagoga Judaica, large 12mo. Basil, 1661, treats of the sects, rites, &c. of the Jews, in fifty chapters.

Harmer's *Observations* on divers passages of scripture, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1776, &c. are an attempt to illustrate difficult passages from recent travels, &c. Of this work there is a new edition with improvements, by Dr. A. Clarke. Baynes, London.

Burder's (S.) Oriental Customs is conducted on a similar, but more condensed and methodical plan, 2 vols. 8vo.

Elsneri Observationes Sacræ in novi Fœderis libros, 2 vols. 8vo. Trajecti ad Rhenum, 1720,—and,

Alberti Observationes Philologicæ, in Sacros Novi Fœderis libros, 8vo. Ludg. Bat. 1725, stand high as critical works.

Blackwall's sacred Classics, defended and illustrated, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1727—1737. &c. is a work of some worth, but more on account of *subordinate criticisms*, than for its leading design, which is to set up the writers of the New Testament as competitors with and superior to the best classics of Greece and Rome. This is to compare the proclamations of a king with the eloquent speeches of an orator; or an edifying popular hymn with the artful and pompous ode of a poet laureat.

Dr. Owen's Συνεσις Πνευματικη, or, the causes, ways, and means of understanding the mind of God, as revealed in his word, 12mo. Lond. 1678, is in the usual way of that great man.

§ 16. Hebrew Lexicons and Concordances are highly useful to a biblical student.

Castelli *Lexicon Heptaglotton*, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1669, commonly attends Walton's Polygott.

Calasio's Concordantiæ sacrorum Bibliorum Hebraicorum, by Romaine, 4 vols. fol. Lond. 1747, is highly valuable, not merely as a *Concordance*, but also as a *Lexicon*.

Taylor's Hebrew Concordance, adapted to the English Bible, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1754, accompanied with easy rules for reading Hebrew, is much esteemed; and may be considered as an abridgment of the united labours of Buxtorf and Calasio.

GUSSETII Lexicon Linguæ Hebraicæ, 4to. Lips. 1743, proposes to ascertain the primary signification of words and phrases.

LEIGH's *Critica Sacra*, fol. Lond. 1662, and 4to. 2 vols. 1735, Hebrew and Greek, on the Old and New Testament, has been long esteemed for the remarks and references it contains; but is now nearly superceded by recent authors.

PARKHURST's Hebrew Lexicon, without the points, 4to. Lond. 1792; and royal 8vo. 1800; is greatly enriched with quotations from authors ancient and modern, for the elucidation of the Old Testament.

STOCKII Clavis Linguæ sanctæ veteris Testamenti, 8vo. Lips. 1753, is a work of uncommon merit, in consulting which the serious biblical student is very seldom disappointed.

LEUSDEN's Clavis Hebraica Veteris Testamenti, 4to. Ultraj. 1688; And

BYTHNER's Lyra Prophetica, 4to. Lond. 1664, are principally designed for beginners; and concerning which Bishop WATSON says, 'LEUSDEN's *Clavis* may be as useful for those who begin with Genesis, as BYTHNER's *Lyra* is for those who begin with the Psalms.'

ROBERTSON's Clavis Pentateuchi, sive Analysis omnium vocum Hebraicarum suo ordine in Pentateucho Moseos occurrentium: una cum versione Latina et Anglica, 8vo. Edinb. 1770, is a work of similar use to those last mentioned.

§ 17. *Greek* Lexicons and Concordances come next to be noticed.

TROMMII Concordantiæ Græcæ in Septuaginta Interpretes, 2 vols. fol. Amst. 1718, is, as Dr. Taylor expresses it, 'a very exact and judicious work. Under each Greek word, the corresponding Hebrew term or terms, with the Latin rendering, are included.

PARKHURST's Greek Lexicon, 4to. Lond. 1794, and royal 8vo. 1800, is on the same plan with his Hebrew Lexicon, and merits the same character,

STOCKII Clavis Linguæ sanctæ Novi Testamenti, Lips.

1752, on the same plan with the Hebrew, and generally sold with it.

H. Stephani Concordantiæ Græco-Latinæ Testamenti Novi, Genevæ, 1624, is a plain, useful work.

Schinedii Concordantiæ Novi Testamenti, fol. Lips. 1717, is considered as a great improvement on that of Stephens.

Williams's Concordance to the Greek Testament gives the English version to each word, and points out the principal Hebrew Roots corresponding to the Greek words of the Septuagint, 4to. Lond. 1767.

Minterti Lexicon Græco-Latinum, in Nov. Testament, 4to. Franc. ad Mœn. 1728, contains all the words in the New Testament, and a Latin interpretation, their derivation, several passages of the Septuagint, where the word or phrase is found, and the corresponding Hebrew from which it is rendered. Bishop Watson observes, that this book 'may supply the place of a Greek concordance to the Septuagint and New Testament.'

Suiceri Thesaurus Ecclesiasticus e Patribus Græcis, ordine alphabetico concinnatus, fol. 2 vols. Amstel. 1682 and 1728, notices a great number of Greek words, which are omitted by the common Lexicographers, and produces, under each word, quotations from the Greek Fathers. Words of importance are discussed at considerable length, and their different import exhibited.

Schleusneri Lexicon Græco-Latinum in Novum Testamentum, 8vo. Lips. 1801; edit. alt. 4 vols. is, in the words of Dr. A. Clarke, "the completest work of the kind ever published. The literal meaning of each word is accurately given—the different acceptations it has in all parts of the New Testament carefully exhibited—and those uses of the word illustrated and vindicated by quotations from the best Greek writers. The author has availed himself of the labours of all preceding lexicographers on the Greek Testament, and in this department of literature has left little to his successors to supply. It is printed on three different kinds of paper.

§ 18. *English* Dictionaries and Concordances must not be omitted.

Wilson's Christian Dictionary, fol. Lond. 1678, &c. and Brown's Dictionary of the Bible, 2 vols. 8vo. last edition, are on a very different plan, and have considerable merit. BUTTON's Dictionary of the Bible, compared with BROWN's, is not unlike BUTTERWORTH's Concordance compared with CRUDEN's; compressing much useful matter in a small compass.—But the most complete work of the kind is

CALMET's Dictionary of the Holy Bible, 2 vols. 4to. by C. TAYLOR, London. In this work, many difficult passages of the Holy Scriptures are well explained; and it contains a continued Appendix, elucidating scripture incidents, histories, and expressions, by *similar* incidents, &c. selected from the most authentic voyages and travels; with remarks and illustrations.

CRUDEN's Concordance, 4to. Lond. 1769, is, at the same time, a valuable Scripture Dictionary; and so complete, as a concordance, that nothing remains materially deficient.

BUTTERWORTH's Concordance, 8vo. and TAYLOR's of a similar size, are but an abridgment of Cruden's, yet are convenient, as more portable and less expensive.

CRUTTWELL's Concordance of Parallels, 4to. is a late publication, sells high, but the biblical student may expect good interest.

TALBOT's Complete Analysis and new Arrangement of the Bible, 4to. Leeds, is a curious, and in some respects, an useful publication; including the *whole Bible verbatim*, scientifically arranged.

DODD's Common-Place Book to the Bible, 4to. Lond. is on a smaller scale, and of easier purchase.

§ 19. COMMENTATORS on the *whole Scriptures*.

HENRY's *Commentary*, 5 vols. fol. or 6 vols. 4to. Edin. 1797, or 4to. edition, Lond. is an incomparable work, and too well known to need a discriminating character.

GILL's *Exposition*, 9 vols. fol. Lond. 1763, &c. abounds with rabbinical and theological information; but, though upon the whole a very valuable work, it is often prolix and tautological, and sometimes injudicious—A new edition in 4to. is in contemplation.

POOLI Synopsis Criticorum, 5 vols. fol. Lond. 1669, &c. Utrecht, 1684, &c. This work, Bishop Watson observes, is a kind of abridgment of *Critici Sacri*, enriched, however, with many additions. It is much esteemed abroad, three editions of it having been published on the continent.

Poole's Annotations on the Holy Bible, wherein the sacred text is inserted, and various readings annexed, together with the parallel scriptures, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1688, and a late ed. in 4to. is a very judicious work. The first vol. to Isaiah inclusive, by Mr. Poole himself, the remainder by several divines who have followed his plan.

The Dutch Annotations upon the whole Bible, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1657, translated into English by Theodore Haak, Esq. who shews, in the narrative prefixed, that 'the sum of the charges the State was at in this behalf, [the Belgic translation and annotations] amounted to twenty-five thousand pounds sterling, and upwards.'

Ostervald's Bible, with Annotations, fol. and 4to.

Haweis's Evangelical Expositor, 2 vols. fol.

Scott's Family Bible, 4 vols. 4to.

Brown's Family Bible, 2 vols. 4to.

Clark's Bible, with Annotations, fol. This has been recommended in prefaces by Dr. Owen, Mr. Baxter, and Mr. Whitfield.

Patrick, Lowth and **Whitby** united, 6 vols. fol. form a commentary on the whole Bible, in the Latitudinarian strain. Also

Orton, on the O. T. and **Doddridge's** Family Expositor abridged by S. Palmer, 6 vols. and 2 vols. 8vo. contain a brief exposition of the whole bible.

§ 20. Commentators on the *New Testament*.

Doddridge's Family Expositor, or a Paraphrase and Version of the New Testament, with critical notes, and a practical improvement of each section, 6 vols. 4to. Lond. 1761. There are also several 8vo. editions of this excellent work. In the late new ed. of Doddridge's works complete in 10 vols. royal 8vo. the Family Expositor with an improved Index, &c. is comprised in 5 vols.—There is also now publishing a Superb Edition in 4to.

Guyse's practical Exposition of the New Testament, in the form of a Pharaphrase, with occasional notes, and serious recollections, 3 vols. 4to. 1739, &c. there are also editions in 6 vols. 8vo. If this work has not an air of elegant criticism and modern refinement, like the Family Expositor, it is very sound and judicious; expressed in a style significant, perspicuous, and correct, though not ornamented.

Bezæ Annotationes, in quibus ratio interpretationis redditur; accessit etiam J. **Camerarii** in novum fœdus commentarius, fol. Cantab. 1642, contain, besides the old Latin version, Beza's own version; and in the side margin is given a summary of the passage, and, in the argumentative parts, the connection. The Annotations are chiefly verbal criticisms, tending to justify his version.

Wolfii curæ Philologicæ et Criticæ, in omnes libros Nov. Testament. 5 vols. 4to. Hamb. 1739, Basil. 1741. This is, in a great measure, a compilation after the manner of **Poole**'s Synopsis; but, as Bishop **Watson** observes, **Wolfius** does not simply relate the sentiments of others, but frequently animadverts on them with great critical discernment.

Bengelii Gnomon Nov. Testament. 4to. Tubingæ 1759, and Ulmæ, 1763, contains an instructive preface, a perspicuous analysis of each book, with short notes, in the true taste of judicious criticism. His plan is a perfect contrast to that of **Wolfius**; 'Simplicem fere veritatem, sine sylva multarum opinionum, propono.'

Raphelii Annotationes in S. Scripturam; Historicæ in Vetus, Philologicæ in Nov. Testament. 2 vols. 8vo. Ludg. Bat. 1750, is an attempt to illustrate the Holy Scriptures from the classical Greek Historians, Xenophon, Polybius, Arrian, and Herodotus.

Hammond's Paraphrase and Annotations upon all the books of the New Testament, fol. Lond. 1675,—and

Burkit's Exposition of the New Testament, are both valuable, but extremely different in their design. The former excels in learned criticism, (to be read cum grano salis) the latter in a devout and practical strain.

Whitby's Paraphrase and Commentary on the New Testament, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1727, 5th edition, of which also there is a 4to. edition, 2 vols. neatly printed besides some elaborate and valuable criticisms, may serve to shew what a systematic and bigotted, professed Arminian can say on that side of the controverted questions.

Wesley's Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament 4to. or 3 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1790, proceed on the same general principles as Whitby, but with a reference throughout to *personal* religion.

§ 21. Commentators on *select parts* of the *Old* and *New* Testament.

Orton's Exposition of the Old Testament, 6 vols. 8vo. Shrewsbury, 1787, has many good hints, but is chiefly valuable for the reflections at the close of each chapter.

Lightfoot's Works, 2 vols. fol. contain a chronicle of the times, and the order of the text of the Old Testament: The harmony, chronicle and order of the New Testament: The harmony of the four Evangelists among themselves; a commentary on the Acts of the Apostles; Horæ Hebraicæ, &c. on the four Evangelists, the Acts, and First Corinthians. Most of this author's remarks are deeply critical and curious.

Calvini omnia opera, 9 vols. fol. Amstel. 1671, contain Commentaries on the Pentateuch and Joshua,—Homilies on Samuel,—Sermons on Job,—Commentaries on the Psalms, and on Isaiah,—Prælections on Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the minor Prophets,—Commentaries; in the way of Harmony, on the Evangelists; on the Acts of the Apostles, the epistles of Paul, and the other catholic Epistles. Calvin is, in general, a very able and judicious expositor; his method perspicuous, his manner popular, with a style pure and pleasing. Former editions are far inferior to this.

Chrysostomi Opera, 8 vols. fol. Etonæ, 1613, sell low, and yet, according to Dr. Harwood, 'is the best printed Greek book England can boast.' There is a splendid edition printed at Paris, 1718, &c. 13 vols. fol. Chrysostom's works contain expositions on many parts of the Old and New Testament; his manner is instructive, though not often critical. 'All his discourse tends to persuasion,' says Fenelon: 'he placed every thing with judgment; and was well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, and the manners of men. He entered into their hearts, and rendered things familiarly sensible to them. He had sublime and solid notions, and is sometimes very affecting.'

St. Jerome and St. Augustine wrote much, by way of comment on the Scriptures; but, as Bishop Watson justly observes, 'As interpreters of Scripture, the fathers are far inferior to the moderns, but they may be useful examples to us in piety and zeal.'

Newton (Bp.) on the Prophecies, 2 vols. 8vo. 1793, treats on many prophetic parts of the Old and New Testament with great labour, perspicuity and judgment; but without many original thoughts.

Ainsworth on the Pentateuch, Psalms, and the Song of Solomon;—**Patrick** on the historical parts of the Old Testament;——W. **Lowth** on the Prophets;——**Pocock** on some of the minor Prophets;——**Locke** on Paul's Epistles, &c. after the valuable expositors already mentioned, may be thought superfluous. There are some others, however, that deserve more particular notice.

§ 22. Commentators on *select parts* of the Old Testament only.

Mr. A. **Fuller** on Genesis, 2 vols. 8vo. intended chiefly for family use.

Macgowan's Discourses on Ruth, 8vo. Lond. 1781.

Hutchinsons's Exposition of the book of Job, fol. Lond. 1669, is the sum of above 300 expository lectures, preached at Edinburgh, and a work of considerable merit. His method is perspicuous, and his observations founded on the text are judicious and profitable.

Caryl's Exposition, with practical observations upon the book of Job, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1776, is a most elaborate, learned, judicious, and pious work; containing a rich fund of critical and practical divinity.

Molleri Enarrationes Psalmorum Davidis, fol. Genevæ, 1619, form a judicious explication; but the work is rather deficient in practical improvements.

Hammond's Paraphrase and Annotations on the Psalms. fol. Lond. 1659, is of use chiefly for its critical hints;—

Amessi Lectiones in omnes Psalmos Davidis, 8vo. Amstel. 1636, for its conciseness, accurate method, and very judicious observations; 'opus omnibus qui pietatem colut, ac imprimis verbi ministris, perutile;'—

Horne's Commentary on the book of Psalms, first published in 2 vols. 4to. Ox. 1776, and since in 2 vols. 8vo. and 3 vols. 12mo. for its devotional tendency;—and

Dickson's brief explication of the Psalms, 12mo. 1653, for the justness and fertility of its observations.

Hildersham's 152 Lectures on Psalm li. fol. Lond. 1635, are a rich mine of experimental and practical divinity.

De **Coetlogon**'s Sermons on Psalm li. 2 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1757, represent the same penitent in a modern dress.

Greenham on Psalm cxix. in his works, fol. Lond. 1681, is admirable, for the time in which it was written, both for method and style; and, like all the productions of this author, is full of spiritual unction.

Manton on Psalm cxix, is voluminous, in general judicious, plain, not very interesting in his manner, yet unaffected.

Owen's Practical Exposition on Psalm cxxx. 4to. Lond. 1680, and since in 8vo. is a most excellent work on repentance and forgivness, and enters deeply into several parts of experimental religion.

Gill's Exposition of the Canticles, a work separate from his other exposition, 4to.—and Harmer's outlines of a new Commentary on Solomon's Song, 8vo. Lond. 1768, are a perfect contrast in their design and execution. The former is a minute detail on the allegorical sense, and a spiritual improvement, the latter consists of remarks, observations, and queries, with a view to ascertain the literal meaning. **Romaine**'s discourses on the Song of Solomon treat only of a few detached parts evangelically improved.

Vitringæ Commentarius in librum prophetiarum Jesaiæ, 2 vols. fol. Basil, 1732, sells high, but is a work in great repute.

Lowth on Isaiah, 4to. Lond. 1778, since published in 8vo. 1793,—**Blanney** on Jeremiah, 4to.—and **Newcome** on Ezekiel and the minor prophets, are works of the same nature, and may be consulted with considerable advantage, as they include a new translation and critical notes.

Willet's Hexapla on Daniel, fol. 1610, is a work of much information, as it contains the opinions of many authors on each point of difficulty. This author has written comments on Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Samuel, Romans, Jude, and some detached parts of books; but in none does he discover more skill and judgment than in the present work.

Newton's (Sir **Isaac**) Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel, 4to. Lond. 1733, contain some very valuable hints.

Burroughs on Hosea, 4to. Lond, 1652, is a pleasing specimen, to shew how the popular preachers of his time applied the scriptures to the various cases of their hearers, in their expository exercises.

Hutcheson's Brief Exposition on the smaller Prophets, 12mo. Lond. 1655, deserves the same character as the author's other work on Job.

Stock's Commentary, and Torshell's Exercitation on Malachi, fol. Lond. 1641, is a work recommended by Bp. **Wilkins** as the best; but the matter is much better than the manner.

§ 23. Of commentators on *select parts* of the New Testament only.

Macknight's Harmony of the four Gospels, with a Paraphrase and Notes, 2 vols. 4to. Lond. 1763, has many preliminary Dissertations, on Chronology, Jewish Antiquities, &c. and is much esteemed for some valuable criticisms.—The same author's new literal translation of all the apostolical epistles, with a commentary and notes, 3. vols. 4to. Edinb. 1795, second edition, contains a general preface, and four Preliminary Essays of great use; but his sentiments on some controverted points are to be read with caution.

Anselmi Commentaria in Evangelia, in omnes Pauli Epistolas, &c. fol. 1560, (if you except some of his catholic notions, and his allegorical and mystical paragraphs,) will afford pleasure and improvement.

Johannis Markii Sylloge Dissertationum Philologico-Theologicarum, ad Selectos quosdam textus Novi Test. 4to. Rotter. 1721, contains twenty-five learned Dissertations on select passages, the most important, difficult, or controverted.

Campbell's Translation of the Gospels, with Notes, Dissertations, &c. 2 vols. 4to. contains much valuable information, in the style of judicious criticism.

Blair's (James) Discourses on Matt. v—vii. form, according to Dr. Doddridge, the best Comment of any extant. He adds, " a beautiful simplicity and great seriousness run through his writings. A multitude of excellent hints are dropped, though not executed at large. He has an excellent way of bringing down curious criticisms to common capacities, and has discovered a vast knowledge of the Scriptures." He was an episcopal minister in Virginia, and president of *William and Mary College* there.

Shepard's Exposition of Matt. xxv. 1—13. The Parable of the ten Virgins, fol. Lond. 1660, &c. is a rich fund of experimental and practical divinity; the dress is coarse, but the strain of thought is extremely animated and searching.

Hildersham's Lectures on John iv. fol. Lond. 1632, discover the author to be a sound divine, an admirable textuary, a profoundly experienced christian, and an excellent teacher. These discourses are more concise and finished than those on the fifty-first Psalm. They are dedicated, in 1628, to Henry, earl of Huntingdon, who attended them, when preached at Ashby de la Zouch, and whose uncle and grandfather had been the author's patrons.

Burgess's Expository Sermons on John xvii. fol. Lond. 1656, are full of sound doctrine, methodically arranged, and closely applied in very plain language.

Manton on John xvii. fol. is like the preceding, a sound and elaborate work, and to those who can improve excellent thoughts, abstracted from the modern mode of composition, a rich treasure.

Cradock's Apostolical History, fol. Lond. 1672, contains the acts, labours, travels, sermons, &c. of the apostles, with a brief analytical paraphrase of their epistles.

Gualtheri Homiliæ in Acta Apostolorum, 8vo. Lugduni, 1562, contains 173 Homilies; sound, methodical, and elegant. Gualter was one of the chief reforming divines of Switzerland.

Wilson's Commentary on Romans, fol. Lond. 1653, is in the form of a Dialogue, and abounds with judicious distinctions, and practical uses.

Parr's Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, fol. Lond. 1651, is equally remarkable for soundness of sentiment, familiarity of illustration, and want of taste in style and composition.

Elton on Rom. vii.—ix. fol. Lond. 1653, is a work rich in matter, dressed in the plain and somewhat popular language of its day.

Stafford on Rom. vii. 8vo. and 12mo. enters very minutely into the christian's experience of sin and grace. Were I disposed to recommend learned ingenuity, and critical conjecture, often at the expense of truth, (and probably unsanctioned by the discipline of personal deep experience) the Commentaries of Dr. (John) **Taylor**, and of Mr. **Locke**, might be mentioned.

Burgess's Expository Comment on 2 Cor. i. fol. Lond. 1661, deserves the same character as his work on John xvii.

Ferguson's Brief Expositions of the Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians, 12mo. Lond. 1659, abound with pertinent observations deduced from the text, considered in its proper connection; and in a method almost peculiar to the Scotch divines of the last century.

Luther on the Epistle to the Galatians, fol. and 8vo. is a strong antidote against the popish notion of justification by works.

Perkins's Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, (in his works) is equally sound as the preceding work, but more methodical and comprehensive.

Perkins has written Commentaries also on Matt. v—vii.—Heb. xi.—The Epistle of Jude.—Rev, i—iii. all contained in his works, 3 vols. fol. Lond. 1635.

Byfield on the Epistle to the Colossians, fol. Lond. 1627, is full of good sense and spiritual savour, and abounds with pertinent citations of scripture, without any pretensions to oratorical dress.

Davenant on Colossians, fol. Latin, is much esteemed.

Elton on the Colossians, fol. is nearly on the same plan as his work on Rom. vii.—ix. and of similar character.

Hall's Commentary on 2 Tim. fol. Lond. 1658, is recommended dy Calamy, whose imprimatur it bears, as "both elaborate and judicious." He was minister of King's Norton, in Worcestershire, and Mr. Calamy adds, that this "Commentary is the sum of nigh 30 years study."

Taylor's (Dr. Thomas) Commentary on Titus, fol. Lond. 1658, is the production of a sound and sensible divine, and a very useful preacher; one who had penetrating views of the human heart, and of the sacred oracles.

Owen's Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, 4 vols. fol. Lond. 1668—1684, is a very excellent but scarce work, and sells high. The *Abridgment*, by the present Editor, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1790, includes the Exercitations, and a life of the Author, &c.

Manton's Exposition of James, 4to. Lond. is plain, solid, and practical.

Leighton on 1 Peter, with the prelections, 2 vols. 8vo. are productions of uncommon worth: all this author's works are full of holy simplicity, humility, and benovelent zeal.

Hardy on 1 John, 4to. Lond. 1656, is an unequal work; but the author, in some places, discovers a superior degree of penetration.—The same character may be given to his Exposition of the Epistle to Philemon.

Mede's Clavis Apocalyptica, with his Commentarius ad amussim Clavis Apocalypticæ, included in his works, fol. Lond. 1672, 3d. edit. has ever been considered as a rich mine, of which all subsequent learned commentators have made free and good use.

Daubuz's Perpetual Commentary on the Revelation, fol. Lond. 1720, is a most elaborate work, abounding with learned references and illustrative quotations from the ample store of literature. This great work has been new-modelled and abridged by Mr. Lancaster, 4to. Lond. 1730.

Johnston's (Dr. Bryce) Commentary on the Revelations, 2 vols. 8vo. Edinb. 1794, is a work well calculated for general use, being written with great perspicuity, and in a popular, practical strain.

Newton's (Sir Isaac) Observations on the Apocalypse, 4to. Lond. 1733, being the second part of his Observations on Prophecies, is not an exposition so much as hints. "If I have done any thing which may be useful to following writers," observes this great man, "I have my design. The folly of interpreters has been to foretel times and things by this Prophecy, as if God designed to make them *prophets*. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the Prophecy also into contempt."

Lowman on the Revelation, 4to. and 8vo. labours chiefly to ascertain the fulfilment of the Prophecy, in a number of interesting historic facts.

Mitchell's New Exposition of the Revelation of St. John, gives a new translation from the original Greek, and professes to apply the events that have occurred to the letter and context of the prophecy, in a manner more satisfactory than had been done by former commentators.

§ 24. (III.) Of such books as treat of revealed religion, whether *systematically*, or in a *miscellaneous* manner. And, first, of public *Confessions* and *Catechisms*.

The *Thirty-nine Articles* of the Church of England are sometimes, and the *Catechism* is always inserted in the common prayer books.

The *Thirty-nine Articles*, and the *Constitutions* and *Canons* of the Church of England, 8vo. Lond. 1739, containing also Acts of Parliament, and Proclamations concerning ecclesiastical matters.

The Westminster's Assembly's Confession of Faith, A. D. 1647; or, Articles of religion approved and passed, by both houses of Parliament, after advice had with an Assembly of Divines, called together by them for that purpose, 4to. and 8vo. This excellent confession of faith is often reprinted in Scotland, with The Larger and Shorter Catechisms, The Sun of saving Knowledge, The National Covenant, The solemn League and Covenant, The Acknowledgment of Sins, The Directory for public worship, The Form of Presbyterian Church-government, and, The Directory for Family Worship. Vid. edit. 8vo. Edinb. 1793.—Those chapters which relate to *Discipline*, as they now stand in the Assembly's Confession, were not printed by order of the House, but recommitted, and at last laid aside; but the whole confession, as it came from the assembly, being sent into Scotland, was immediately approved by the General Assembly and Parliament of that kingdom, as the established doctrine and discipline of their Kirk, and thus it has been published to the world ever since.

The *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms* of that Assembly, A. D. 1647, 4to. 8vo. &c. While the Confession was carrying on through the Assembly, Committees were appointed to reduce it into the form of Catechisms; one *Larger*, for the benefit of a public exposition in the pulpit, according to the custom of foreign churches; the other *Smaller*, for the instruction of children.

The *Savoy Confession*; or, a Declaration of the faith and order owned and practised in the congregational churches in England, agreed upon and consented unto by their Elders and Messengers, in their meeting at the Savoy, Oct. 12th, A. D. 1658, 18mo. Lond. 1688, &c.—The year after the conference, this was translated into Latin by Professor Hornbeck. It proceeds upon the plan of the Westminster Confession, and in most places retains the very expressions. Of both these confessions it may be said, that they have been ranked by very good judges among the most perfect systems of divinity that have been published, within so small a compass, in any age or nation.—For a fuller account of these Confessions and Catechisms, and the proceedings upon them, see **Neale**'s History of the Puritans.

Corpus et *Syntagma Confessionum* Fidei, quæ in diversis regnis et nationibus, ecclesiarum nomine, fuerunt authentice editæ, 4to. Genevæ, 1654, exhibits not only the Body of numerous public Confessions, but also a collection of Scriptures under the separate articles, with quotations from the Fathers.

An *Harmony* of the Confessions of the Faith of the Christian and Reformed Churches, which purely profess the holy doctrine of the gospel, in all the chief kingdoms, nations and provinces of Europe, 8vo. Camb. 1586, contains nineteen Sections on the chief parts of divinity, and in each of them the corresponding parts of eleven public confessions.

Arnoldi Religio Sociniana, seu Catechesis Racoviana major Publicis Disputationibus, Refutata, 4to. Amstel. 1654, contains the text of the Socinian Catechism, with a methodical refutation.

Gordon's (Sir Adam) Homilies of the Church modernized, 2 vols. 8vo.

§ 25. Among the best authors who have written on the *whole system* of divinity are the following. We begin with those who have written in Latin.

Turrettini Institutio Theologiæ Elencticæ, 3 vols. 4to. Traj. ad Rhen. 1701, is learned, methodical, perspicuous, and very comprehensive; a work of singular excellence, by one of the best of men. With these there is commonly bound a 4th vol. of disputations by the same author. Eight of these are "De Necessaria Secessione nostra ab Ecclesia Romana;" Twelve, "De Satisfactione Christi," and the others are miscellaneous. He was a professor of divinity, and christian minister at Geneva; a person of great distinction, born to an ample fortune, but more distinguished by "the modesty of a humble and mortified temper, and of an active and fervent charity." See Bishop Burnet's Travels.

Turrettini Compendium Theologiæ Didactico-Elencticæ, ex Theologorum nostrorum Institutionibus Theologicis auctum et illustratum, a Leonardo Riissenio; cum Catalogo Hæreticorum, tam veterum quam recentiorum una cum præcipuorum eorum dogmatum Epitome, 4to. Amst. 1695, is executed with perspicuity and judgment.

STAPFERI Institutiones Theologiæ Polemicæ Universæ ordine scientifico dispositæ, 5 vols. 8vo. Tiguri, 1743, is a master-piece on polemic divinity.

AQUINATIS Summa Totius Theologiæ, fol. Colon. 1622, includes a prodigious mass of Scholastic Theology; handled in a manner at once the most subtle and perspicuous. Aquinas came as near to the truth, on many important theological questions, as his popish connections would admit. If he had not the fervid zeal of St. Augustine, he had a more subtle genius, more accuracy of thought, and a stupendous degree of patient labour. "Notwithstanding the ridicule which usually, in these days," says Bp. WATSON, "attends the mere mention of the *Angelic* Doctor, I will venture to affirm, That in that work there are, mixed indeed with many difficult subtleties and perverse interpretations of scripture, not a few theological questions of great moment stated with clearness and judgment." Pref. to Collect. of Tracts.

WITSII De Œconomia Fæderum Dei cum Hominibus, 4to. Basileæ, 1739, &c. Though Witsius's work is less comprehensive, and in many respects inferior to the *Institutio* of Turrettin, yet his manner is generally more interesting, eloquent, and impressive. The dedication is too luscious, and scarcely sober language. The English translation, 3 vols. 8vo. is generally faithful, but not elegant. A new translation of this work, executed witht fidelity and taste, is a *Desideratum.*

PICTETI Theologia Christiana, 2 vols. 12mo. Genevæ, 1696, &c. is upon the whole, an excellent compendium.

Markii Christianæ Theologiæ Medulla Didactico. Elenctica, 12mo. Amstel. 1721, &c. is often used on account of its comprehensive brevity, as a text-book for lecturing.

Synopsis Purioris Theologiæ, Disputationibus quinquaginta duabus comprehensa, ac conscripta per J. POLIANDRUM, A. RIVETUM, A. WALEUM, A. THYSIUM, S. S. Theologiæ Doctores et Professores in Academia Leidensi;

12mo. èdit. 3tia. Lugd. Bat. Elzevir, 1642, is a work of no common merit; and is equally distinguished for purity of sentiment, extent of learning, and perspicuity of method and language.

Amesii Medulla Theologiæ, 18mo. Amstel. 1634, is, upon the whole a judicious compendium.

Vogelii Thesaurus Theologicus, ex sola Scriptura depromptus, 2 vols. (sometimes bound in one) 12mo. Tubingæ, 1607, is an epitome of a larger work, written in the morning of the Reformation. It consists of aphorisms, with scripture proofs under each.

Dr. **Owen**'s Θεολογȣμενα, de Natura, Ortu, Progressu, et Studio Veræ Theologiæ, 4to. Oxon. 1661, may be mentioned in this connection; though not a complete Body of Divinity, it is well calculated to assist in forming a judgment of the comparative merits of systems, and of divine truth.

Le Blanc Theses Theologicæ, fol. Lond. 1675, treats of the principal subjects in divinity; states the difference with fairness, and discusses every subject with great learning snd eloquence.

Forbesii Theologia Moralis, et Instructiones Historico-Theologicæ, in his works, 2 vols. fol. Amstel. 1703. Forbesius a Corse, or Forbes, a native of Scotland, was an excellent man, a profound scholar, and masterly writer.

Campbell's Lectures on Systematic Theology is a posthumous publication, and contains many useful hints to theological students.

§ 26. Some of the best systems of divinity written in *English*.

Ridgley's Body of Divinity, wherein the Doctrines of the christian religion are explained and defended, 2 vols, fol. Lond. 1731, is the substance of several Lectures on the Assembly's Larger Catechism, most judiciously executed.

Gill's Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity, 3 vols. 4to. 1769, &c. and 3 vols. large 8vo. 1796. Gill was a very learned and pious man, but his notions of *moral obligation* were not correct; which led him to some peculiarities of sentiment respecting *grace* being the *obliging* as well as the *efficient* cause of evangelical *duty*, and which disposed him, in arguing with Arminians, too often to *cut* the knot of difficulty instead of *solving* it, and to deal in round assertions with slender arguments.

Hopkins's System of Doctrines, contained in divine Revelation, explained and defended, 2 vols. 8vo. Boston, (America) 1793, is a work but little known in Great Britain, as a few copies only have been imported. The celebrity of the author, who, with Edwards and Bellamy, completes the American triumvirate of eminent writers in the same strain of divinity, would have rendered this work much more popular and useful, had he kept clear of a bold and grating sentiment, "That God has *foreordained* all the moral evil which does take place," and which he endeavours to defend with more ingenuity than success.

Watson's Body of practical Divinity, consisting of above 170 Sermons on the Lesser Assembly's Catechism, fol. Lond. 1692. Very "plain and pithy."

Usher's Body of Divinity, fol. Lond. 1647, &c. is handled in the way of question and answer; it is in general instructive, and clears up some important points of difficulty.

Boston's Illustrations of the doctrines of the Christian Religion, with respect to Faith and Practice, upon the Plan of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, comprehending a complete Body of Divinity, 3 vols. 8vo. Edinb. 1773. has all the disadvantages of a posthumous publication, the method and style conduct the imagination to the middle of the preceding century. The illustrations are very plain and familiar, and the strain eminently practical.

Brown's View of natural and revealed religion, 8vo. must be recommended, not for the graces of composition, but the soundness of the matter. The Introductory Address to Students is close and awakening to a high degree.

Lewis's (George) Drych Ysgrythyrol, neu Gorph Ddifinyddiaeth, 8vo. Caerlleon, 1797, may be here noticed as a valuable Body of Divinity, and the only one of the kind composed in the British language. It consists of six parts, Theologia, Anthropologia, Christologia, Charitologia, Pneumatologia, and Nomologia; and is well calculated to promote the knowledge of undefiled religion.

Berry-street Sermons, or, Faith and Practice represented in Fifty four Sermons on the principal Heads of the Christian Religion, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1757, by WATTS, NEAL, GUYSE, PRICE, JENNINGS, and HUBBARD, preached at the request and by the encouragement of W. Coward, Esq. are highly and deservedly esteemed.

WARDEN'S System of Revealed Religion, 4to. Lond. 1769, is "digested under proper heads, and composed in the express words of scripture." A frequent reading of this work must be advantageous, were it only to render the phraseology of scripture more familiar: but the order and succession of the parts also render it edifying. Every chapter is in the form of a regular and continued discourse, and therefore different in *design* from a common place-book.

An Abstract of the whole Doctrines of the Christian Religion, with Observations: By John ANASTASIUS FREYLINGHAUSEN. The first Book stereotyped by the new process. 8vo.

ROBINSON'S Christian System unfolded, 3 vols. 8vo.

There are some books which contain a considerable *part* of a complete system, or treat of some leading subjects only; such are the following:

NORTON'S Orthodox Evangelist, 4to. Lond. 1657. The author was a minister at Ipswich, in New England; he had an aphoristic mode of writing, was fond of definitions, and well versed in scholastic theology.

STRONG'S Discourse of the Two Covenants, fol. Lond. 1678, is very evangelical, and uncommonly judicious.

BAXTER'S Catholick Theology; plain, pure, peaceable; for Pacification of the dogmatical word-warriours, fol. Lond. 1675, is a curious work, abounding with scholastic distinctions and quotations. The author has evidently "peace, love, and unity" as his *end*, but takes his way to it through a perplexing wood of thorns and briars.

COLES'S Practical Discourse of God's Sovereignty; with other material points derived thence, 8vo. Lond. 1788, is strongly recommended by Mr. Romaine. Coles is equally argumentative, scriptural, and practical. When setting out in the ways of God, I found this book singularly useful; a carnal minister (who had gravely recommended for my perusal Dean Swift's Tale of a Tub) observing my partiality to it, remarked with great emotion, "If the doctrines contained in that book be true, I am *sure* to go to hell;" I then replied, what I now deliberately confirm, "If these doctrines be not true, I have no *hope* of going to heaven."

Pearson's Exposition of the Creed, fol. Lond. 1676, &c. including the Notes, is a very learned and elaborate work.

Burnet's Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, fol. Lond. 1705, is more popular, but also more lax and superficial than the preceding work. The good bishop seems to be so attentive to the various and contradictory opinions of *others* on the several articles, that you are often at a loss to find his *own*.

Beveridge's Private Thoughts, 12mo. Lond. 1724, &c. is in a strain of popular yet close reasoning, proceeding from deep conviction of the radical truths of christianity, and a devotional spirit.

Morning Exercises, 6 vols. 4to. Lond. were delivered in several courses of lectures, by some of the most pious and popular ministers in London, in the latter part of the 17th century. They treat of the Protestant principles, against Popery; of the peculiar Doctrines and Duties of the Gospel; and of important cases of conscience. They are more elaborate than elegant, and discover more piety than taste.

Edwards's History of the Work of Redemption, 8vo. Edinb. 1774, Lond. 1778, with Notes, and in vol. 5. of **Edwards's** Works complete, now publishing by the Editor of this work, contains the Outlines of a Body of Divinity, in a method entirely new. Though a posthumous publication, it discovers the same originality and accuracy of thought with the other works of the author.

Booth's Reign of Grace, from its Rise to its Consummation, 12mo. Edinb. 1784, &c. is a masterly performance.

Venn's Complete Duty of Man, 8vo. consists of animated, popular addresses; on the several parts of Christian Faith and Practice, in a strain truly evangelical.

Doddridge's Lectures on the principal subjects in Pneumatology, Ethics, and Divinity, is a posthumous work, originally designed for, and constantly used by the author's students. For a character of these Lectures, see the Advertisement prefixed to the late edition of them included in the author's detached works; with notes by the Editor.

Pretyman's Elements of Christian Theology, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. may serve to shew what is the *fashion* of modern divinity, how different from that of our venerable reformers and martyrs; and how a creed or public confession may be made to signify any thing or nothing, and yet the labour be pronounced "orthodox." The work contains, however, much useful information.

Priestley's Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion, 2 vols. 8vo. is almost the only work of modern Socinians in the form of a regular system of religion; and in that view it may contribute to the gratification of curiosity, and indirect advantage, in an hour of relaxation or controversy.

Whitby's Discourse on Five Points; Election, Redemption, Original Sin, Efficacious Grace, and Perseverance, 8vo. Lond. 1735, &c. is a bold effort to overturn the leading doctrines of the Protestant Reformers, by learned obscurity, artful sophistry, and disgusting tautology.

Gill's Cause of God and Truth, 4 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1735, &c. &c. 4to. 1772, is a professed answer to Whitby. So likewise is a considerable part of a work just published by the author of this appendix, entitled, An Essay on the Equity of Divine Government and the Sovereignty of Divine Grace. Wherein, particularly, the Latitudinarian Hypothesis of indeterminate Redemption, and the Antinomian notion of the Divine Decrees being the Rule of ministerial conduct are carefully examined.

Barcley's Apology for the True Christian Divinity, 8vo. Lond. 1765, (first published 1675) was written in Latin and English by the author, and has been since translated into various languages. Barcley was a man of extraordinary abilities, and, if read with care, will afford considerable information, not only concerning the peculiar tenets of the Quakers, but also on other subjects. His method and style are far superior to most of his contemporaries.

§ 27. The English *practical* writers are extremely numerous, and we may, with Dr. Doddridge, distribute them into the Puritans, the Nonconformists, and Episcopalians.* Those writers of works which he has characterized, shall be noticed in his own words, when they suit my purpose, distinguished by inverted commas.

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* In his Preaching Lectures. These Lectures are included in the late edition of his works in 10 vols. 8vo.

We begin with the *Puritans.** On these Dr. Doddridge very properly remarks. "They are too often despised; yet there was good sense and learning in our fathers' days as well as in our own: as our grandmothers had beauty, though their antiquated dress may disguise it in some measure."

Perkins's works, 3 vols. fol. Lond. 1617, &c. have been, in part, noticed before, under the head of Expositions of parts of the New Testament. Perkins had been very wild, and ran great lengths in prodigality, even while an university-student, for some time; but through grace became eminently pious, and in a great degree useful as a preacher. For his time, his style is remarkably pure and neat; he had a clear head, and excelled in defining and analysing subjects. His strain is highly Calvinistic, but he carried the idea of reprobation too far. His sermons were said to be *all law* and *all gospel.*

Preston's Works are very excellent, especially his Treatise of The *New Covenant*, or, The Saints Portion, 4to. Lond. 10th edit. 1655. He died in 1628, in the forty-first year of his age; his practical works and sermons were printed by his own order after his death. His method is highly instructive; and his manner familiar, insinuating, yet very close. He abounds in apt similes, and illustrative instances, generally well supported and applied. His doctrine drops as the rain, his speech distils as the dew.

Bolton published many volumes, 4to. in a separate form. "He had been a notorious sinner, reclaimed by a great work of terror; therefore is excellent both for conviction and consolation. His style is rather inclined to the bombast, yet many expressions are truly great and magnificent. The beauties of imagination are chiefly apparent in his *Four Last Things*, but his most useful works are, his directions for walking with God, and for comforting afflicted consciences."

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* **Puritans**, those who wished for a greater degree of purity in the church than was publicly countenanced, before the act of uniformity, in 1662, (see p. 88) and especially those who died before the last mentioned period.

Hall's (Bp.) Works, 3 vols. fol. Lond. 1634, &c. were published at different times. There is a late edit. in 10 vols. by Mr. **Pratt.** "He abounds rather too much with antithesis and witty turns, and seems to have imitated Augustine and Seneca. His Contemplations are very valuable, for language, criticism, and devotion; next to them are his Meditations, Letters, and Balm of Gilead."

Sibbs's Works, 4to. &c. are in high estimation with some people, especially his *Bruised Reed*, and *Soul's Conflict.* He often fails in *precision* of thought, expression, and in the use of figurative language. He was, however, one of the most celebrated preachers of his time, and adorned with humility, charity, and heavenly-mindedness.

Rogers (Mr. John, of Dedham) was one of the most awakening preachers of his age, of whom Mr. Neale observes, Bp. Brownrigge used to say, That he did more good with his *wild notes*, than we [the bishops] with our *set music.* His doctrine of Faith, 12mo. 3rd edit. Lond. 1629, and a Treatise of Love, sometimes bound with it, are well worthy of perusal. His method is popular, his language familiar, yet often energetic, his strain evangelical, animated, and experimental. He wrote also an exposition on the first Epistle of Peter.

Fenner's Works, fol. Lond. 1657, discover much acquaintance with religion in all its parts; his manner plain, zealous, and alarming.

Dyke's (Daniel, B. D.) Works, 4to. Lond. 1635, part of them the 6th edit. published since his death by his brother Jeremiah Dyke, are well written for the time. His treatises of Repentance, and the Mystery of Self-Deceiving, are very searching. His doctrine falls as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.

Reynolds's Works, one large volume fol. and different parts in 4to. are "most elaborate, both in thought and expression. Few men are more happy in the choice of their similitudes." He was popular, affable, meek, and humble; of great learning, and a frequent preacher.

Jackson's (Dr. Thomas) Works, 3 vols. fol. Lond. 1673, are very elaborate. His method is circuitous, his style involved, yet often dignified, and never mean. "He is generally full of meaning; it is scarce possible to open in any page where we shall not find something, seldom if at all to be met with any where else. A curious reader will find something remarkable, and worthy of reading in the whole."

Pritchard's (Rhys, A. M.) Works, in the British language, 8vo. Llanymddyfri, 1770, under the title of "Y Seren Foreu, neu Ganwyll y Cymry," must not be omitted; perhaps there is no book written in the same language that has been more useful, and more universally read in the Principality. The author, who was born in 1579, and died 1644, was a burning and shining light, in a country then uncommonly dark, viz. Llanymddyfri, Carmarthenshire. The work is in poetic numbers, on the most interesting subjects of practical christianity.

Ball's (John) Works are numerous; The Power of Godliness, fol. Lond. 1657, published after his death, by Mr. Simeon Ash, is deservedly esteemed. It is written by way of question and answer, and indicates much reflection, and experimental acquaintance with the powers of the soul, and the workings of sin and grace. He was a learned and pious man, deserving as high esteem (says Mr. Baxter) as the best bishop in England, though he was content with a poor house, a mean habit, and a small maintenance.

Bridge's (William) Works, 4to. consisting of about 12 treatises, are all on spiritual and practical subjects, and of the best tendency, though not the finest as to polish. He was silenced by Bishop Wren, in 1637, in the city of Norwich; became pastor to the English church at Rotterdam, where Mr. Jer. Burroughs was preacher; returned to England in 1642, settled at Great Yarmouth, where he was ejected in 1662, and died in 1670.

Crisp's Works, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1791, with explanatory notes, by Dr. Gill, have in them a singular mixture of excellencies and faults. What is exceptionable arises chiefly from unqualified expressions, rather than from the author's main design. "He was much followed," Mr. Neale observes, "for his edifying manner of preaching, and for his great hospitality." Mr. Lancaster, the first publisher of his works, observes, "that his life was so innocent and harmless from all evil, so zealous and fervent in all good, that it seemed to be designed as a practical confutation of the slander of those who would insinuate, that his doctrine tended to licentiousness."

Hildersham's Expositions on Psal. l. and John iv. were before noticed, but as a *practical* writer he cannot be sufficiently recommended. What has been said before of **Greenham**, **Byfield**, and **Taylor** may suffice.

Latimer's Sermons, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1758, may be noticed here, without contesting the propriety of placing the venerable martyr among the Puritans. These volumes abound with the boldest strokes of wit and satire, clothed in language the most plain and familiar. The keenest reproofs are conveyed by stories, comparisons, and a great variety of ways, evincing the intrepidity of righteousness in a very uncommon degree.

Burroughs's (Jeremiah) Works, consist of about eleven or twelve small 4to. volumes. His Exposition of Hosea has been before noticed. His "Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment" has been reprinted often and well deserves a careful perusal. He was a most candid and moderate divine, and a famous preacher to two of the largest congregations about London, viz. at Stepney and Cripplegate. He died in 1646.

Cradock's (Walter) Works, 8vo. Chester, 1799, published by the Rev. T. Charles and P. Oliver, excel in clearness of doctrine, especially in the grand article of christian righteousness. The author discovers a great simplicity of manner as a preacher, with much energy and loving zeal. Mr. Cradock laboured in the Principality, and so useful a preacher was he in his day, that even now the professors of the gospel are, in many parts of Wales, called Cradocks. He flourished about 1630.

Sanderson's (Bp.) Works, fol. Lond. 1686, 3rd. edit. are truly judicious, but not sufficiently plain and familiar to claim popularity. Bp. Wilkins marks our author as the *principal* in his list of practical writers.

§ 28. The next class of English practical writers is that of *Nonconformists*.

Owen's (Dr. John) Works are very numerous, and most of them of a practical nature. A complete edition of all his works is a great *Desideratum*. This is now in contemplation, of which a Prospectus will probably be soon published. "Dr. Owen's style resembles St. Paul's: great zeal, and much knowledge of human life is discovered in some of his writings, especially in his book of

Apostacy. Dr. Wright seems to have taken many things from hence in his Deceit of Sin. His book on the Hebrews, his greatest work. The means of understanding the mind of God in the scriptures, one of the best. Communion with God, and on the Person of Christ, the most celebrated. On the cxxx Psalm, most excellent. His discourses on Indwelling Sin, Spiritual Mindedness, and Mortification of Sin, shew great Improvements in practical religion."

Goodwin's (Dr. Thomas) Works are numerous, and in point of sentiment valuable. Several separate treatises were published in his life time, and after his death, 5 vols. fol. He was a great admirer of Dr. Preston, and afterwards himself a famous preacher in Cambridge. In 1639 he became pastor of an Independent congregation at Arnheim, in Holland, but returned again to England. He was a good scholar, and an eminent divine and textuary. His style is involved and obscure. "Goodwin's pieces published in his life time are the most valuable, [a list of which see in Nonconf. Memor. vol. i. p. 187.] many accurate and valuable remarks on scripture. The Child of Light walking in Darkness is very useful for afflicted consciences."

Baxter's practical Works, 4 vols. fol. Lond. 1707, (and it is proposed to print them in 16 vols. 8vo. immediately, with his notes on the New Testament included,) contain many admirable things, especially in reference to the improvemenet of time, the worth of the soul, and the awful realities of a future state. "Inaccurate, because he had not a regular education; he always wrote in the views of eternity. He shews a manly eloquence, and the most evident proofs of an amazing genius, with respect to which he may not improperly be called, The English Demosthenes. Very proper for conviction. Few were ever instrumental in awakening and converting more souls." His manner is full of rousing energy.

Manton's Works are very numerous; besides many smaller works, some of them already noticed under the head of Expositions, there are 5 vols. fol. Archbishop Usher used to say, "he was a *voluminous* preacher;" not that he was tedious for length, but he had the art of reducing the substance of volumes of divinity into a narrow compass. Mr. Charnock often represented him as the best *collector of sense* of the age. Mr. Baxter says, he was a man of great learning, judgment, and integrity, and an excellent, most laborious, unwearied preacher. Dr. Bates says, a clear judgment, rich fancy, strong memory, and happy elocution met in him, and were excellently improved by diligent study.—"Plain, easy, unaffected; his thoughts generally well digested, but there is seldom any thing extraordinary in them. His remarks on scripture are judicious."

Bates's Works, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1700, are "charming and elegant; yet his style not formed, his sentences too short, his words very polite; admirable similes, only too many of them; proper to be quoted by those whose genius does not lead them that way. He was well acquainted with poetry and the Belles Lettres; an admirer as well as imitator of Mr. Cowley."

Charnock's Works, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1699, are excellent. Yet Charnock was a deep divine rather than an eloquent writer. He reasons well, but the connecting links of his chain are too much neglected. His sentences have the cast of independent propositions. Too much uniformity of style prevails, and very seldom any real pathos occurs; his sentances are also defective in the collocation of the words, and often the *terms* are not well chosen. Dr. Doddridge and Mr. Toplady seem to have entertained very different views of Charnock's writings: The former says, "His thoughts are often in disorder, he has no clear and distinct ideas in many of the differences he makes." Mr. Toplady, speaking of his book on the Attributes, observes, "Perspicuity and depth; metaphysical sublimity and evangelical simplicity; immense learning, and plain, but irrefragable reasoning; conspire to render that performance one of the most inestimable productions, that ever did honour to the sanctified judgment and genius of a human being."

Howe's Works, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1724. "Howe seems to have understood the gospel as well as any uninspired writer, and to have imbibed as much of its spirit. There is the truest sublime to be found in his writings, and some of the strongest pathos; yet often obscure, generally harsh; he has imitated the worst part of Boyle's style. He has a vast number and variety of uncommon thoughts, and is, on the whole, one of the most valuable writers in our language, or I believe in the world. His best pieces are, The Blessedness of the Righteous, Delighting in God, Enmity and Reconciliation, Redeemer's Tears and Dominion. Some Funeral Sermons, and part of his Living Temple are most excellent."

FLAVEL's Works, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1701, &c. and 6 vols. 8vo. Newcastle, 1796. "Plain, popular, and tender; proper to address afflicted cases, and to melt the soul in love. His token for mourners is inimitable. Allusions to Pagan stories both in Bates and him are entertaining and useful."

GURNAL's Christian in complete Armour, fol. Lond. 1669, 5th edit. and 4 vols. 8vo. Full of allusions to scriptural facts, and figures of speech, generally well supported; sanctified wit, holy fire, deep experience, and most animated practical applications.

TAYLOR (Nathaniel) "might properly be called the dissenting South, were he not vastly superior to him in sense and piety. He has vast wit, and great strength of expression, yet apt to aggravate matters a little too much. His language remarkably proper, beautiful, and sprightly. His best pieces are his discourses on Faith, Deism, and the Covenant; he wrote little else."

AMBROSE's (Isaac) Works, fol. Lond. 1701, have been before noticed, very experimental and practical.

BROOKS's (Thomas) Works are numerous, and many of them have singular titles. They have been highly popular, on account of their spirituel tendency. His book of Precious Remedies against Satan's Devices has passed through 57 editions; his Mute Christian under the Smarting Rod, through 50; and his Apples of Gold for young men and women through 25 editions. As a preacher he was very affecting and useful; but many of his phrases and comparisons are too homely and familiar for imitation.

SHAW (Samuel) published many small works, but his Welcome to the Plague, his Immanuel, 12mo. often reprinted, are deservedly in high estimation. The latter treats, with much depth and unction, of the divine life in the soul. He seems to have caught the mantle of Mr. Arthur Hildersham, who had resided before him at the same place, Ashby de la Zouch.

HEYWOOD's (Oliver) Works are valuable in themselves;

and are strongly recommended by the most excellent character of the writer. His treatise, entitled Life in God's Favour, has been lately reprinted by Mr. Fawcett, 12mo. and a Life of the venerable author, 12mo.

Evans's (Dr. John) Christian Temper, 2 vols. 8vo. contains a course of excellent sermons on that subject. "His style is grave, plain, manly, and nervous; his heads always distinct, and well ranged, the scriptures well and properly collected."

Cole's (Thomas) Discourse of Regeneration, Faith, and Repentance, 8vo. Lond. 1689, &c. is highly evangelical and judicious. He was principal of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, and Tutor there to the celebrated Mr. Locke. After his ejection thence he preached in London, and was active in opposing the Neonomian doctrine. He died in holy triumph 1697.

Wright on Regeneration, 12mo. and other works. "Remarkable for great simplicity, awful solemnity, his heads distinct, his sentences very comprehensive, a deep sense of God and a good acquaintance with the world; words elegant and well chosen, but his cadence little regarded. He always appears master of himself; his book of Regeneration is one of the most useful pieces published in this age; his book of self-possession is one of the best pieces of Christian philosophy ever published. His subsequent treaties are not equally valuable."

Watts's Works, 6 vols. 4to. and 7 vols. 8vo. by Mr. Parsons. A good edition of **Watts's** Works, in 6 vols. 4to. or 10 vols. 8vo. is a *desideratum*. "Very different from Wright, his style harmonious, florid, poetical, and pathetic; yet too diffuse, too many words, especially in his later works, and his former are too much loaded with epithets; yet on the whole excellent."

Henry's Works (exclusive of his Exposition) have been printed in one volume, fol. also lately in 4to. uniform with Bagster's edition of the Commentary, and some parts of them often reprinted. "Very popular, his style short and pointed, many antitheses; a little fancy, v. g. he makes his heads begin with the same letter, or some chiming words, yet oftentimes natural; great seriousness, sprightly thoughts digested in very good order. His style is formed on scripture; and he has many beautiful allusions to it."

Earle on the Sacrament, 12mo. is often reprinted. He wrote but little, "his style judicious, pathetic, and very laconic."

Bradbury's Works are chiefly sermons. The Mystery of Godliness (on 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16.) considered in sixty-one Sermons, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1750—And Sermons preached on interesting subjects, and in critical times, published by his successor. Mr. R. Winter, 3 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1762—and especially his admirable Treatise, entitled *Christus in Cælo*, all deserve reading. An excellent textuary, he has sometimes strokes of real wit; his manner of handling doctrinal subjects is highly strengthening to faith, tending to comfort, and subservient to practice. He is too fond of elisions, as 'tis, 'twas, 'em, &c. which gives to his style, in some degree, an unpleasant, cramped appearance. His warmth, in the Arian controversy, together with the tickling power of his witty turns, made his *rational* opponents cry out "*Fire and Feather!*"

Bennet's Christian Oratory, 2 vols. 8vo. is "plain, serious, and practical, but sometimes flat; his Christian oratory is almost his only piece, which had been better if some of the instances had been avoided, and the plan more fully complete in a single volume."

Jennings's Sermons to young People, 12mo. "Methodical, plain, and serious, some pretty striking turns of thought, his strain very evangelical; he is, upon the whole, the Flavel of the present age, only much more polite."

Grovener's Mourner, 12mo. "A most popular Preacher, in whose compositions there is a strange mixture of familiar and pathetic; many strong figures of speech, especially the prosopopeia and dialogism, beyond any other writer of his age. His Essay on Health is most celebrated."—A volume of his sermons is about to be republished, recommended by Mr. Bogue.

Bunyan's Works, 2 vols. fol. and 6 vols. 8vo. discover an original genius, depth of christian experience, and much greater precision of thought and expression than might have been expected from a man who made no pretensions to literature. His Pilgrim's Progress and Holy War are inimitable specimens of genius and humour, in the service of experimental religion.

Marshall on Sanctification, 12mo. Mr. Hervey's very strong recommendation of this book is well known. Mr. Trail says, "Dr. Owen's excellent book of Justification, and Mr. Marshall's book of the Mystery of Sanctification, by faith in Jesus Christ, are such vindications and confirmations of the Protestant doctrine, against which I fear no effectual opposition." In some instances the author is not so perspicuous as might be wished; but Dr. Bellamy either did not understand Marshall, or indulged a degree of polemic unfairness, altogether unworthy of his general character.

Doddridge's Works, detached from, but uniform with his exposition, 5 vols. 8vo.

Stennett's Works, 4 vols. 8vo. Dr. Stennett is a pleasing writer, but pleases less by energy, or depth, or sublimity, than by judiciousness and ease.

Mason's (Rev. John, A. M.) Christian Morals, 2 vols. 8vo. and Lord's-day Evening Entertainment, 4 vols. 8vo. like every other production of this author, discover a proper sense of moral obligation, but somewhat sparing of evangelical peculiarities, with exact arrangement of matter, perspicuity of style, well-chosen expressions, and a more scrupulous regard to harmonious numbers than is common to the best writers.

Polhill's Speculum Theologiæ in Christo, English, 4to. Lond. 1678, like all the works of this learned and pious layman, contains many excellent representations of gospel truths, intermixed with a strain of sublime devotion.

Gouge's (Thomas) Works, 8vo. Lond. 1706, are like their venerable author, full of piety, charity, humility, and moderation; in a word, full of practical wisdom, accompanied with zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls.

Jay's Sermons, 2 vols. 8vo.—and Short Discourses for Families, 2 vols. 8vo. Eloquent and pious.

Palmer's Discourses on Truth, are well worthy of attentive perusal.

§ 29. The next class of Practical Writers are those of the *Episcopalian* persuasion subsequent to the act of uniformity in 1662.

Tillotson's Works, 3 vols. fol. Lond. 1728, &c. or 12 vols. 8vo. and 12 vols. 18mo. Tillotson's method is clear, his notions of religion are much in the Arminian strain, his style is defective both in harmony of numbers, and energy of manner. "His best pieces are at the beginning of his first and second vol. In that of evil speaking and forgiving our enemies he made great use of Barrow and Wilkins."

Barrow's Works, 3 vols. fol. Lond. 1700, commonly bound in 2 vols. He has not the laboured plainness of Tillotson, but is far superior to him in fulness of thought, and strength of expression; he is less dictatorial, but more persuasive. Dr. Doddridge calls Barrow "the most *laconic* writer among our old divines." But Dr. Blair, I think with more propriety, gives his style the character of *full* and *ample*. There are instances, he observes, of writers, who, in the midst of a full and ample style, have maintained a great degree of strength. Livy is an example; and, in the English language, Dr. Barrow. Barrow's style has many faults. It is unequal, incorrect, and redundant; but withal, for force and expressiveness uncommonly distinguished.

Wilkins's Works, are very miscellaneous; "his method very exact, but too scholastic; his style almost as easy and pure as Tillotson's; many excellent thoughts are thrown together in a very intelligible manner. His discourses on natural religion, the Beauty of Providence, Prayer, and Preaching, I think are almost all his practical works, and all deserve reading.

Beveridge's practical Works are "much like Henry's, but not equal to his. His private thoughts are most valuable, and fit to be read by a young minister. Many of his sermons are very low.

Sherlock's Works on Providence, Death, a future State, Judgment, &c. 8vo. "On moral subjects his arguments are generally strong, exceeding proper for conviction. He is plain and manly, great and animated; his representations are exceeding awful; therefore his Death and Judgment are his best books. His book on Providence is by many thought to be the best on that subject."

Horneck's Works are sometimes "exceedingly pathetic and elegant; chiefly fit for devotional subjects; his words often much greater than his thoughts. His best pieces are those upon consideration and the crucified Jesus."

Hopkins's Works, 2 vols. fol. "His motto *aut suavitate* *aut vi* well answered his works; yet he trusted most to the latter, awakening men awfully, yet sometimes he bent the bow till it broke, an error greatly to be guarded against.

LAW's Works, 12 vols. 8vo. are very unequal, some of them bearing a strong tincture of mysticism, while others are of an excellent practical tendency. "His writings have a severity seldom to be found; his language is generally just and beautiful, very nervous, but he is too ready to affect points of wit and strokes of satire, in which he does not equal South. Many of his characters are excellently drawn, in which he comes nearer the Jesuits than any writer in English. His treatise of christian perfection is very famous, his serious call much better.

SECKER's Works consist chiefly of sermons, charges, and lectures on the church catechisms. As a celebrated preaching-prelate Secker follows Tillotson. "When Secker preaches, or when Murray pleads," Mr. Hervey observes, "the church is crowded, and the bar is thronged." Like Tillotson also he departed too much from primitive peculiarities of the gospel, though far preferable to most of his episcopal contemporaries. "The charge on Education at Oxford is one of the wisest I ever read, considered in the view of a philosophical essay."

A. Bp. **LEIGHTON** has been recommended before as an expositor, but all his works are admirable. "They ought to be reckoned among the greatest treasures of the English tongue; they continually overflow with love to God, and breathe an heart entirely transformed by the gospel, and above the views of every thing but pleasing God."

WHITEFIELD's Works, 8 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1771, &c. including his life, and the volume of sermons taken in short hand, are the free, generous, ardently spiritual effusions of a benevolent mind, and of a genius naturally sublime, sanctified by sovereign grace. Perhaps no man ever possessed in a higher degree than Mr. Whitefield *abilities* for exemplifying the rules of Longinus on the sublime; and, considering the nature of his subjects, and the mixed assemblies he addressed, perhaps no one *actually* exemplified them to greater effect. Great elevation of mind, disinterested zeal, invincible fortitude in the best of causes, an astonishing degree of pathos; a style suited to the subject, popular because plain, and capable of supporting the most violent action, and of producing the highest effects from a concurrence of the sentiment and the majestically nervous numbers of which the periods are composed,—all contribute to distinguish this remarkable writer from every other modern.

Cennick's Sermons, 2 vols. 12mo. Great simplicity and zeal.

Walker's (Samuel) Works, consisting of sermons on the baptismal covenant, &c. Plain, sensible, searching.

Jenks's Devotions, Meditations, and Submission to the Righteousness of God, in separate volumes, 8vo. are the productions of a devout and well-informed mind; a minister who had but little success in his life time, but whose labours proved the seed of a future harvest.

Romaine's Works, 8 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1796, are in a very practical and experimental strain; there is in them great sameness, as to thought and expression, which nevertheless becomes interesting by the real importance of the subject, and by proceeding from a mind much impressed with it; they are plain truths uttered from deep experience, and presented by the hands of faith and love.

Toplady's Works, 6 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1794. Toplady dwelt much on the importance of Calvinistic principles, which he defended with great energy of language and argument; but he too often indulged, in controversy, to an asperity of manner, and sometimes a ludicrous representation of his antagonist, altogether inconsistent with the dignity of the subject.

Hervey's Works have been published in 8vo. and 12mo. very frequently, in detached parts; but a neat uniform edition of *all* his publications, with a complete index is a *desideratum*. In Hervey's works are displayed a firm faith in the divine testimony, and strong traits of benevolence; in a style too rich and ornamental; he therefore may be read to great profit, in order to strengthen our faith in the promises, to raise our affections towards heaven, and even to improve our style, when that verges to the contrary extreme of poverty, whether of expression, description, or figurative language. But a rich fancy, without a critical judgment, should beware of Hervey as a *model*.

Horne's (Bp.) Works, Discourses, 4 vols. 8vo. &c. This writer seems to have had as much devotion, and regard for the grand principles of christianity, as command respect; but few evangelical preachers, notwithstanding, would like to take him for a pattern.

Simeon's Helps to Composition, 4 vols. royal 8vo. containing the outlines of 500 Sermons. Judicious and evangelical.

§ 30. We come now to notice a few of the Scotch, American, and other foreign practical writers, beginning with the first of these.

Dunlop's Sermons and Lectures, 2 vols. 8vo. Edinb. 1722, &c. This author was professor of divinity and church history in the university of Edinburgh; when he preached he had very crowded and attentive auditories. When he flamed in the pulpit, and triumphed over his captivated hearers, it was not by mere artificial rhetoric, but from the real sentiments and affections of his own soul; and transfused into theirs. Argumentative, copious, fervent.

Scougal's Works, though few, "are of the first rank; decent eloquence, suited to his subjects, noble and proper thoughts run through every page of his writings. He seems the best model of this class; his life of God, and other sermons, should be often read. He died at 28; the world had an unspeakable loss in him."

Maclaurin's Sermons and Essays, 12mo. is a work of uncommon worth; truth and experience traced to their genuine principles, a mind equally devout and penetrating, and language highly expressive and energetic.

Erskine's (Ralph and Ebenezer) Works are voluminous, highly evangelical, the productions of minds very strongly attached to truth, devotional, and zealous.

Erskine's (Dr.) Sermons, 2 vols. 8vo. Very scriptural, and full of excellent matter.

Witherspoon's Works, 9 vols. 12mo. Sound, sensible, perspicuous, argumentative, and often eloquent.

Boston's Works, fol. &c. His Body of Divinity has been before noticed; his Fourfold State, his Treatise on the Covenant, sermons, and other practical pieces are scriptural, and, as to sentiment, judicious; the style is plain, without artificial ornament, yet illustrations and comparisons often striking.

Riccalton's Works, 3 vols. 8vo. have considerable originality in the mode of explaining or defending the truth.

Walker's (Robert) Sermons, 4 vols. 8vo. are truly excellent in a *practical* view, but this author deserves further notice as a model of composition.

Blair's (Dr.) Sermons, 4 vols. 8vo. are chiefly moral discourses. They excel in perspicuity of arrangement and expression, but are too stiff, artificial, and elaborate for models of pulpit eloquence, independent of the strain of doctrine. With other views, many of them may be read to advantage.

§ 31. Among the Americans and other foreigners, the following practical writers are observable.

Shepherd's Works, (exclusive of his parable of the Virgins,) The Sincere Convert, the Sound Believer, The Doctrine of the Sabbath, &c. 12mo. Lond. 1650, &c. are sometimes bound in one thick volume. Concise, awful, searching.

Edwards's Works are numerous; a complete edition, with a good index, in about 8 vols. 8vo. is *a desideratum*. Since the first edition of this Appendix, this desirable work has been undertaken, and the 4 first vols. are published. Four other vols. will complete the work. A profound searcher into the genuine sources of truth, well versed in the holy scriptures, a close and minute reasoner, a strenuous defender of holiness and the rights of God; plain and perspicuous in his method, unadorned, and prolix in his language. On the whole, a most excellent writer, both practical and controversial.

Davies's (Samuel) Sermons, 5 vols. 8vo. are a posthumous publication, which, had the editor been less scrupulous, might have appeared to much greater advantage, as to the method, proportion, &c. They should be read, not as models of composition, but in reference to the serious truths they contain, and the *vivida vis animi* of the preacher.

Dickenson's Letters on Christianity, are judicious, but written in circumstances of greater danger perhaps from Antinomian licentiousness than is common in this country.

Bellamy's Works, True Religion delineated, 12mo. and other pieces, cannot well be accounted for without taking into consideration the circumstances just mentioned. He had correct views of the moral law and government of God, the necessity of holiness, and the divine influence; and therefore may be of great use to a mind prone to neglect the grounds of moral obligation. But he does not appear equally clear in the doctrines of sovereign grace, the nature of the two covenants, faith and assurance.

A few other foreign writers, and chiefly devotional, may be here noticed in a more general way.

St. **AUGUSTINE'S**, **ANSELM'S** and **BERNARD'S** Meditations, in Latin, or translated by Stanhope, in one vol. 8vo.——Thomas a **KEMPIS'S** Christian Pattern, in Latin; translated by the same, 8vo.——**GERARD'S** Meditations, 12mo.——Boehm Enchiridion Precum.——**ARNDT'S** Verus Christianismus——**FENELON'S** Meditations,—*cum multis aliis.*

§ 32. Having pointed out the principal practical writers, both English and foreign, it may be proper to name a few authors who excel in different ways, as models of composition for a preacher, omitting living ones.

DODDRIDGE excels in distinctness of method, and scripture phraseology,—**SAURIN** in bold originality of thought, method and expression,—**ATTERBURY** in purity of language, delicacy of thought, and graceful allusions,—**WITHERSPOON** has many general excellencies united, without any overpowering feature,—**WHITEFIELD** has the grand principles of the sublime and pathetic, mixed with the familiar, applied habitually to popular use,—**BOURDALOUE**, for the union of nature and art; logic and pathos; perspicuity, simplicity, and yet variety of plan; for knowledge of the world and the human heart; a sublime genius without affectation, invigorated by religion and study; his forcible reasonings and oratorial precautions have inexpressible charms; in a word, if you except his peculiar notions as a catholic, *the prince of preachers.* After all, for a young English preacher it would be extremely difficult to point out a better model than **WALKER'S** (Robert) Sermons; where taste, perspicuity, plainness, and godliness reign alike. In brief, *Walker* is Whitefield polished by Blair.

§ 33. (IV.) We now proceed to **Ecclesiastical History**, including *Biography*, *Chronology*, *Rites* and *Antiquities;* beginning with the first of these. And here it will be proper to take the order of time, and to appropriate this section to those histories that stand more particularly connected with the *Old Testament.*

But I must now premise, that, as this appendix is grown so large, however amusing it might be to myself, or gratifying to the young reader especially, to give a brief character of each writer on all the following subjects, necessity constrains me to forbear.

Josephus's Works, by Whiston, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1755, &c.

Millar's History of the Church, under the Old Testament, from the creation of the world; wherein also the affairs and learning of heathen nations before the birth of Christ, and the state of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity to the present time, are particularly considered. To which is subjoined, a discourse to promote the conversion of the Jews to christianity, fol. Edinb. 1730.

Stackhouse's History of the Bible, 2 vols. fol.

Shuckford's Connection of sacred and profane History, from the creation of the world to the dissolution of the Assyrian empire, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1743. There is a late ed. by Dr. A. Clarke.

Prideaux's Connection of the Old and New Testament, in the history of the Jews and neighbouring nations, from the declension of the kingdom of Israel and Judah to the time of Christ, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1749, &c.

Fleury's History of the Israelites, by Farnworth 8vo. The last and best ed. by Dr. A. Clarke.

§ 34. Histories of the *Christian Church.* These are either general or particular; we begin with the *former.*

Lampe's Synopsis Historiæ Sacræ et Ecclesiasticæ ab origine Mundi ad præsentia tempora, 12mo. Traj. ad Rhen. 1735.

Turrettini (Job. Alph.) Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ compendium, a Christo nato usque ad annum 1700, 12mo. Gen. 1736.

Dupin's History of the church, from the beginning of the world to the year of Christ 1718, 4 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1724. This edition has a comple index to the whole.

MOSHEIM's Ecclesiastical History, 6 vols. 8vo. translated by Maclaine.

GREGORY's (Dr.) History of the Christian church, 2 vols. 8vo.

MILNER's History of the Church of Christ, 4 vols. 8vo. 1794, &c.

HAWEIS's Impartial and succinct History of the Rise, Declension, and Revival of the Church of Christ, from the Birth of our Saviour to the present time. With faithful characters of the principal personages, ancient and modern, 3 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1800.

CAMPBELL's Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, 2 vols. 8vo. and JORTIN's Reflections on the same subject, do not embrace a regular series of facts; but point out the prominent parts and circumstances of the general subject, with interesting remarks.

Those who wish to range in a larger field, and to enter into the *minutiæ* of ecclesiastical affairs, should consult the following works.

Ecclesiastica Historia, intergram Ecclesiæ Christi ideam, quantum ad locum, propagationem, persecutionem, tranquilitatem, doctrinam, Hæreses, ceremonias, gubernationem, Schismata, Synodos, personas, miracula, martyria, religiones extra ecclesiam, et statum imperii politicum attinet, secundum singulas centurias, perspicuo ordine complectens; singulari diligentia et fide ex vetustissimis et optimis historicis, patribus, et aliis scriptoribus congesta; per aliquot studiosos et pios viros in urbe Magdeburgica, 7 vols. fol. 1562, &c. These MAGDEBURG CENTURIATORS, as they are called, (who were Mr. F. Illyricus, J. Vuigandus, M. Judex, B Fabor) conclude with the Twelfth century. This conspicuous monument of Protestant zeal and literature soon attracted the attention, and excited the jealous feelings of the catholic party, who looked to Cardinal Baronius to retrieve their honour, and to heal their bleeding cause.

BARONII Annales Ecclesiastici, 12 vols. fol. Moguntiæ, 1601. This wonderful monument of literary toil closes with the twelfth century.

SPONDANI Annalium Ecclesiasticorum C. Baronii continuatio, ab anno 1197, quo is desiit, ad finem 1646, 2 vols. fol. Lugd. 1678. The same plan is pursued as that of Baronius.

FLEURY's Ecclesiastical History, translated by Herbert, 4 vols. 4to Lond. 1727. The original work comes down to the beginning of the fifteenth century, but the translation ends with the seventh.

§ 35. *Particular* histories of the christian church, or such authors as contain only some *parts* of the christian history, are very numerous; some of the most interesting and useful are the following:

The History of the Church, from our Lord's Incarnation to A. D. 594, by EUSEBIUS, SOCRATES, and EVAGRIUS, with Eusebius's Life of Constantine, fol. Camb. 1683. This English translation is made from Valesius's edition, and includes his notes, &c. This latter in 3 vols. fol. Paris, 1678, is preferable to that of 1659, &c.

NEWTON's Review of Ecclesiastical History, 8vo.

MILLAR's History of the Propagation of Christianity, and overthrow of Paganism, 2 vols. 8vo. Edinb. 1723.

GILLIES's Historical Collections, relating to remarkable periods of the success of the gospel, and eminent instruments employed in propagating it, 2 vols. 8vo. Glasg. 1754.

Father PAUL's History of the Council of Trent, fol. Lond. 1620. Brent's translation.

BURNET's History of the Reformation, 3 vols. fol.

KNOX's History of the Reformation of the Church of Scotland, from A. D. 1422 till 1567. fol. Lond. 1644.

CROOKSHANK's History of the State and Sufferings of the Church of Scotland, from the Reformation to the Revolution, 2 vols. large 12mo. Edinb. 1762.

LIMBORCH's History of the Inquisition, by Chandler, 4to.

NEAL's History of the Puritans, 2 vols 4to. and 4 vols. 8vo.

NEAL's History of New England, containing an impartial account of the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of the country, to the year 1700.

MATHER's Magnalia Christi Americana; or, The Ecclesiastical History of New England, from its first planting in 1620, to the year 1698, fol. Lond. 1702.

FOX's Book of Martyrs, containing an account of the sufferings and death of the Protestants in the reign of queen

Mary the First, illustrated with copper-plates; revised and corrected by an impartial hand, fol. Lond. 1732.

Fox's Book of Martyrs, by Madan. fol.

Bogue and **Bennet** are about to publish the History of the English Nonconformists in 4 vols. 8vo.

§ 36. Next to such parts of Christian history, we come to notice *Biography*. This branch of literature has grown exceedingly of late years; but whatever advantages and superiority the moderns claim in this as well as in other parts of writing, I cannot confine myself to them. They may excel our forefathers in *drawing* characters, but perhaps are not more fortunate in finding excellent *characters* to be drawn.

Biographical (general) Dictionary, 15 vols. 8vo.

Hunter's Sacred Biography, 6 vols. 8vo.

Robinson's Scripture Characters, 4 vols. 8vo. and 4 vols. 12mo.

Taylor's (Jeremy) Life of Christ, and Cave's Lives of the Apostles, fol.

Cave's Lives of the Fathers, fol. Lond. 1716.

Gilpin's Lives of Wickliffe, Cranmer, Latimer, &c. 3 vols. 8vo.

Baxter's Narrative of the most remarkable passages of his life and times, by Sylvester, fol. Lond. 1696.

Nonconformist Memorial, by Palmer, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1777.

Middleton's Biographia Evangelica, 4 vols. 8vo.

Johnson's Lives of the English Poets, 4 vols. 8vo.

Life of P. Henry, 12mo. Salop, 1765.

Life of M. Henry, 12mo.

Orton's Memoirs of Doddridge, 8vo. and 12mo.

Life of Mr. Whitefield, by Dr. Gillies, 8vo.

Life of Mr. J. Wesley, by **Hampson**, 2 vols. 12mo.

Life of Wesley, by Dr. **Coke** and Mr. **Moore**, 8vo. Lond. 1792—Dr. **Whitehead** has also published the Life of Mr. Wesley.

Ptiestley's Chart of Biography; with a Book describing it, 12mo.

Jay's Life of Cornelius Winter, 8vo.

Cecil's Life of J. Newton, 8vo.

Hayley's Life of Cowper, 3 vols. 4to.

Teignmouth's (Ld.) Life of Sir W. **Jones**, 4to.

Jones's Life of Bp. Horne, 8vo.

§ 37. We must now add a few books on *Chronology.*

Usher's Annals of the Old and New Testament, with the Synchronisms of heathen story to the destruction of Jerusalem, by the Romans, fol. Lond. 1658.

Blair's Chronology and History of the World, from the creation to the year of Christ, 1768, illustrated in 66 Tables; of which 4 are introductory, and include the centuries prior to the 1st Olympiad, and each of the remaining 52 contain, in one expanded view, 50, or half a century, with excellent Maps, Lond. 1768.

Playfair's System of Chronology; containing an explanation of the principles of this science; chronological history, lists, tables, and charts, biographical index, &c. fol. Edinb. 1784.—Both these works are admirable; and may well supercede Bedford, Tallent, Scaliger, Strauchius, &c.

§ 38. As to *Antiquities*, the following authors are proposed.

Fabricii Bibliographia Antiquaria, 4to. Hamb. 1716; in which are enumerated all the principal authors then extant, who have treated of Hebrew, Greek, Roman, and Christian antiquities, with many other interesting particulars.

Godwin's Moses and Aaron, &c. 4to, 1685, &c.

Spincer de Legibus Hebræorum Ritualibus, et carum Rationibus, 2. vols. fol. Cantab. 1727.

Lewis's Origines Hebrææ: The Antiquities of the Hebrew Republic, 4 vols 8vo.

Jennings's Lectures on Jewish Antiquities, 2 vols. 8vo.

Relandi Antiquitates Sacræ Veterum Hebræorum breviter delineatæ, 12mo. Traj. Bat. 1717.

Outramus de Sacrificiis, &c. 12mo. Amst. 1688.

Wilson's Archæological Dictionary; or classical Antiquities of the Jews, Greeks, and Romans alphabetically arranged.

Lempriere's Bibliotheca Classica, or Classical Dictionary, 8vo. Lond. 1792, &c.

Potter's Antiquities of Greece, 2 vols. 8vo.

Harwood's Grecian Antiquities, 8vo.

Kennet's Antiquities of Rome, 8vo.

ADAM's (Alex.) Roman Antiquities, 8vo.

BINGHAM's Antiquities of the Christian church; being the chief part of his works, 2 vols. fol. Lond. 1726.

MAURICE's Indian Antiquities, 6 vols. 8vo.

ASIATIC RESEARCHES; or Transactions of the Society, instituted in Bengal, for inquiring into the history and antiquities, &c. of Asia, 4 vols. 8vo. Calcutta, printed, Lond. reprinted, 1798. To be continued.

§ 39. (V.) Books that treat of the PASTORAL CARE and PUBLIC SPEAKING; and first of the *Pastoral Care.*

MASON's Student and Pastor, 12mo.

BURNET's Pastoral Care, 12mo.

OSTERVALD's Lectures on the Sacred Ministry, 8vo.

GERARD's Pastoral Care, 8vo.

BAXTER's Reformed Pastor; or, an abridgment of his Gildas Salvianus, by Mr. Palmer, 12mo.

ORTON's Letters to a young Clergyman, 12mo.

CHRYSOSTOMUS de Sacerdotio, apud opera, vel a Hughes, 8vo, Cantab. 1710.

§ 40. Books that treat of *public speaking* in general.

ARISTOTELIS de Rhetorica, seu Arte Dicendi, libri tres, 4to. Lond. 1696, &c.

QUINTILIANI Institutionum Oratoriarum Libri duodecim, a Rollin, Lond. 1738, &c.

LONGINUS on the Sublime, by Smith, 8vo.

CICERO de Oratore, 8vo.

CICERONIS Orator,—or Guthrie's Translation, 8vo.

CAMPBELL's Philosophy of Rhetoric, 2 vols. 8vo.

GIBBON's Rhetoric, 8vo.

ROLLIN's Method of Study, 4 vols. 12mo.

MAURY's Principles of Eloquence, translated by Lake, 8vo.

BLAIR's Lectures on Rhetoric, &c. 3 vols. 8vo.

MASON's Essays on the Harmony of Compositions, 8vo.

SHERIDAN's Lectures on Elocution,—and the Art of Reading, 2 vols. 8vo.

WALKER's Elements of Elocution, 2 vols. 8vo.

WALKER's Pronouncing Dictionary, 4to.—With his Key to the pronunciation of Greek and Latin Names, &c. 8vo.

§ 41. Books that treat of *Preaching* in particular.

FENELON's (the Archb. of Cambray) Dialogues on Eloquence, translated by Stevenson. Lond. 1808. Though the title refers to Eloquence in general, the object is more particularly that kind which is fit for the pulpit. The character of it has been given before.

FORDYCE's (David) Theodorus; a Dialogue concerning the art of preaching, 12mo. Lond. 1754. This edition has a Sermon on the *Eloquence*, and an Essay on the *Action* of the Pulpit, by Dr. James Fordyce.

These authors, and those included in the Christian Preacher, being made familiar, and their spirit and taste of eloquence, and particularly preaching, thoroughly imbibed, will preclude every thing except a cursory perusal of such as PERKINS's Art of Prophesying.—BLACKWELL's Methodus Evangelica,—EDWARDS's Preacher,—MATHER's (Dr. Cotton) Student and Preacher,—BLACKMORE's accomplished Preacher, &c. &c.

CAMPBELL's Lectures on Theology include the Eloquence of the Pulpit.

§ 42. Something might be said here, in reference to such prose authors as have eminently exemplified the power of eloquence. A few words however must suffice.

Among the *ancients*, (the inspired writer excepted) DEMOSTHENES and CICERO bear the palm.—QUINTILIAN and LONGINUS have wonderfully exemplified their own rules.—The most eloquent Fathers are CYPRIAN, LACTANTIUS,—CHRYSOSTOM and AUGUSTINE.—To these perhaps we may add BERNARD.

Among the *moderns* (living authors and preachers excepted) FENELON and BOURDALOUE, MASSILON, BOSSUET, and SAURIN claim the first rank as preachers to the higher classes of society; but those who suit the middle and lower classes are such as FLAVEL, BAXTER, DUNLOP, WHITEFIELD, and WALKER; to whom we may add the names of DODDRIDGE, and ROMAINE, though extremely different in their manner.

§ 43. (VI.) MISCELLANEOUS Books. And first, those which treat of the *evidences* of revealed religion.

JONES's (Jeremiah) Canonical Authority of the New Testament, 3 vols. 8vo.

GROTIUS de Veritate Religionis Christianæ, 12mo. Hag. Com. 1724.—Clarke's and Madan's Translations, 8vo.

ORIGINES contra Celsum, Cantab. 1658. The other Cambridge edit. 1677, is much inferior; of which Dr. Harwood says, "it is as wretched an edition of a good book as ever was printed."

BUTLER's Analogy of natural and revealed Religion, 8vo.

LACTANTII Opera, 8vo. Oxon. 1684. This eloquent Father treats chiefly of true religion, by exposing the false; and should be read with a view to collect evidences for the truth of christianity.

REEVES' Apologies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Minutius Felix, in Defence of the Christian Religion.

WATSON's Apologies for Christianity, and the Bible, 2 vols. 12mo.

PALEY's View of the Evidences of Christianity, 2 vols. 8vo.

LELAND's View of the Deistical Writers. 2 vols. 8vo. and his Necessity of the Christian Revelation, 2 vols. 8vo.

NECKER's Importance of religious Opinions, 8vo.

HALYBURTON's Natural Religion insufficient; and revealed necessary to man's happiness, 8vo. Montrose, 1798, is a work of great solidity and worth.

BEATTIE's Evidences of the christian Religion, 2 vols. 12mo.

CAMPBELL on the Gospel History, 2 vols. 8vo. and last edit. of his Dissertation on Miracles, 2 vols. 8vo.

DODDRIDGE's Three Sermons on the Evidences of the glorious gospel, 12mo.

DITTON on the Resurrection, 8vo.

WEST on the Resurrection, 8vo.

LYTTLETON (Ld.) on the Conversion of St. Paul, 12mo.

FULLER's Gospel its own Witness, 8vo.

SIMPSON's Plea for Christianity, 8vo.

FAWCETT's Summary of the Evidences of Christianity, 12mo.

ADDISON's Evidences of the Christian Religion, 12mo.

JENYN's View of the Christian Religion, 12mo.

BAXTER's Reasons of the Christian Religion, in his Works.

JENKINS on the Christian Religion, 2 vols. 8vo.

DWIGHT's Discourses on the Nature and Danger of Infidel Philosophy, 8vo. Bristol, 1799.
HALL's Modern Infidelity considered, with respect to its influence on Society, 8vo.
WILLIAMS's Age of Infidelity, in two parts.
PORTEUS's View of the Nature and Evidences of Christianity, 12mo.

§ 44. We shall now notice those books which treat of moral and natural science; and first of *moral* science.

CUDWORTH's Intellectual System, 2 vols. 4to.
GALE's Court of the Gentiles, 2 vols. 4to.
DES-CARTES Opera, Meditationes, et de Passionibus, 4to, 1670, &c.
MALEBRANCHE's Treatise concerning the Search after Truth, Oxford, fol. 1694, &c. 8vo.
ENFIELD's History of Philosophy, from Brucher, 2 vols. 4to.
STANLEY's Lives of the Philosophers, 4to. where the different Systems of the ancient Philosophers are particularly noticed.
HARTLEY's Observations on Man, 4to. and 3 vols. 8vo.
REID's Essays on the Intellectual and Active Powers of Man, 2 vols. 4to. 3 vols. 8vo.
BEATTIE's Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, 8vo.
FORDYCE's (David) Moral Philosophy, 12mo.
LOCKE's Essay on Human Understanding, 2 vols. 8vo. His other Treatises on Government, Education, and Conduct of the Understanding are valuable.
COGAN on the Passions, 8vo.
MILLER's Improvements of the 18th Cent. 3 vols. 8vo.
PALEY's Natural Theology, 8vo.
A good work on *Moral Science* is a *Desideratum*. This branch of human knowledge is but in its infancy. The labours of HARTLEY and PRIESTLY, of REID and BEATTIE have rather checked than promoted its growth.

§ 45. Books on *natural* Science are endless, there are so many Cyclopædias, and Encyclopedias, that few ministers would like to be without one. REES's Cyclopædia, or the Encyclopædia Britannica, will be *instar omnium*. A very few, however, may here be added.

Gregory's Economy of Nature, 3 vols. 8vo.

Derham's Astro and Physico Theology, 2 vols. 8vo.

Nature Displayed, by the Abbé Pluche, translated by Humphreys, 7 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1740, &c.

The History of the Heavens, considered according to the notions of the Poets and Philosophers, compared with the doctrines of Moses, &c. by the author of Nature displayed, translated by de Freval, 2 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1743.

Rollin's Belles Lettres, 3 vols. 8vo.—or, 4 vols. 12mo.

Rollin's Arts and Sciences, 3 vols. 8vo.

Townsend's Guide to Health, 2 vols. 8vo. Also, by the same author, The Physician's vade mecum, 12mo. Lond. 1799. A most useful and elegant little work.

Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1793, with Christian's Notes.

Williams's Justice of Peace, 5 vols. 8vo.

Burn's Law Dictionary, 2 vols. 8vo.

§ 46. Among the Miscellaneous collection, and connected with natural science, we place books of *civil* history, including common *geography*.

The Universal History, ancient and modern, 60 vols. 8vo.

Rollin's Ancient History, 7 vols. 8vo.

Rollin's Roman History, 10 vols. 8vo.*

Bossuet's Universal History, 2 vols. 12mo.

Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, 12 vols. 8vo. might be read with more pleasure and less danger, were not the splendour and the learning mixed with infidel profanity.

Robertson's History of Charles V. 3 vols. 8vo.—or, 4 vols. 18mo.—His History of Scotland, 2 vols. 8vo.—or, 3 vols. 18mo.—and of America, 4 vols. 8vo.

Hume's History of England, to the Revolution, 10 vols. 18mo.—Smollet's Continuation, to 1765, 7 vols. 18mo.

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* The following testimony of the learned Gesner is a true and interesting witness in favour of this excellent author. "Dictionis ejus summa est suavitas et elegantia, et rerum summa præstantia. Imprimis etiam vel eo nomine valde diligo Rollinum, quod ubique hoc egit non tantum ut sapientiores redderet homines, verum etiam meliores. Docet, et emendat; et commendari meretur omnibus. Isag. in Erud. Univ. p. 31.

—Barlow's Continuation, to 1795, 5 vols. 18mo. Lond. 1793, &c. or

Henry's History of Great Britain, to the accession of Edward VI. 1547, 12 vols. 8vo. **Andrew**'s Continuation of Henry, to the Death of Elizabeth, 1602, 2 vols. 8vo. An able continuation to the present time is a *desideratum.*

Adam's Summary of Geography and History, 8vo.

Guthrie's System of Modern Geography, 4to.

Walker's Elements of Geography, 8vo. Lond. 1800.—and his Universal Gazetteer, 8vo. or,

Brookes's General Gazetteer, 8vo.

§ 47. To conclude this list, a few books on *Poetry* and sacred *Music* may be added.

Johnson's English Poets, 75 vols. 12mo. Or,

Anderson's British Poets, 13 vols. large 8vo. which contain the best translations from the Greek and Latin classics.

Milton's Paradise Lost and Regained, by Newton, 4 vols. 8vo.

Young's Night Thoughts, 8vo.—and 18mo.

Thomson's Seasons, 8vo.—12mo.

Pope's Essay on Man—and on Criticism, 12mo.

Dwight's Greenfield Hill, 8vo. New York, 1794, a charming Poem.

Cowper's Poems, 2 vols. 12mo,—and 18mo,—Also his Homer, in blank verse, 4 vols. 8vo.

It will be unnecessary to insert Hymns, original and collected; as most *parties*, and large *congregations* have their own favourite ones; nor would it be always *safe* to recommend what might appear to the preacher the best. Respecting **Watts**'s Psalms, Hymns, and Lyric Poems, there is but one voice. But it does not appear in fact, nor is it reasonable to suppose that Providence ever designed that the spirit of sacred poetry should die with him. **Doddridge** and **Toplady**, the **Wesleys**, **Cowper**, and **Newton**, *cum multis aliis*, have contributed in no small degree to the pleasure and edification of christians.

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